

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.



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## SIX LECTURES

ON

## WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,  
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

BY

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VI.—Design in the Florentine Schools of Engraving.



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## ADVICE.

THE publication of these lectures has been delayed by some rearrangement of the text which I thought it advisable to make in order to bring the entire series at once into permanent form. There will in consequence be no changes made in subsequent editions, but a supplementary number, containing Appendix and two additional plates, will follow the six lectures already announced, at the same price as the illustrated ones; the entire series, unbound, thus costing its first subscribers only 14*s.* 6*d.* But after the publication of the last number it will be sold only in a bound form, constituting the seventh volume of the general series of my works, at 27*s.* 6*d.* per copy. The difficulty of providing these facsimile woodcuts, and some other of the illustrations, is so great that I must strictly limit the number of copies; and the market price, judging from that of my other books at present out of print, is not likely to fall below my publishing one.

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## LECTURE VI.

DESIGN IN THE FLORENTINE SCHOOLS OF  
ENGRAVING.

1. **I**N the first of these lectures, I stated to you their subject, as the investigation of the engraved work of a group of men, to whom engraving, as a means of popular address, was above all precious, because their art was distinctively didactic.

Some of my hearers must be aware that, of late years, the assertion that art should be didactic has been clamorously and violently derided by the countless crowd of artists who have nothing to represent, and of writers who have nothing to say; and that the contrary assertion—that art consists only in pretty colours and fine words,—is accepted, readily enough, by a public which rarely pauses to look at a picture with attention, or read a sentence with understanding.

2. Gentlemen, believe me, there never was any great advancing art yet, nor can be, without didactic purpose. The leaders of the strong

schools are, and must be always, either teachers of theology, or preachers of the moral law. I need not tell you that it was as teachers of theology on the walls of the Vatican that the masters with whose names you are most familiar obtained their perpetual fame. But however great their fame, you have not practically, I imagine, ever been materially assisted in your preparation for the schools either of philosophy or divinity by Raphael's 'School of Athens,' by Raphael's 'Theology,'—or by Michael Angelo's 'Judgment.' My task, to-day, is to set before you some part of the design of the first Master of the works in the Sistine Chapel; and I believe that, from his teaching, you will, even in the hour which I ask you now to give, learn what may be of true use to you in all your future labour, whether in Oxford or elsewhere.

3. You have doubtless, in the course of these lectures, been occasionally surprised by my speaking of Holbein and Sandro Botticelli, as Reformers, in the same tone of respect, and with the same implied assertion of their intellectual power and agency, with which it is usual to speak of Luther and Savonarola. You have been accustomed, indeed, to hear painting and sculpture spoken of as supporting or enforcing Church



doctrine; but never as reforming or chastising it. Whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, you have admitted what in the one case you held to be the abuse of painting in the furtherance of idolatry,—in the other, its amiable and exalting ministry to the feebleness of faith. But neither have recognized,—the Protestant his ally,—or the Catholic his enemy, in the far more earnest work of the great painters of the fifteenth century. The Protestant was, in most cases, too vulgar to understand the aid offered to him by painting; and in all cases too terrified to believe in it. He drove the gift-bringing Greek with imprecations from his sectarian fortress, or received him within it only on the condition that he should speak no word of religion there.

4. On the other hand, the Catholic, in most cases too indolent to read, and, in all, too proud to dread, the rebuke of the reforming painters, confused them with the crowd of his old flatterers, and little noticed their altered language, or their graver brow. In a little while, finding they had ceased to be amusing, he effaced their works, not as dangerous, but as dull; and recognized only thenceforward, as art, the innocuous bombast of Michael Angelo, and fluent efflorescence of Bernini. But when you become more intimately and

impartially acquainted with the history of the Reformation, you will find that, as surely and earnestly as Memling and Giotto strove in the north and south to set forth and exalt the Catholic faith, so surely and earnestly did Holbein and Botticelli strive, in the north, to chastise, and, in the south, to revive it. In what manner, I will try to-day briefly to show you.

5. I name these two men as the reforming leaders: there were many, rank and file, who worked in alliance with Holbein; with Botticelli, two great ones, Lippi and Perugino. But both of these had so much pleasure in their own pictorial faculty, that they strove to keep quiet, and out of harm's way,—involuntarily manifesting themselves sometimes, however; and not in the wisest manner. Lippi's running away with a novice was not likely to be understood as a step in Church reformation correspondent to Luther's marriage.\* Nor have Protestant divines, even to this day, recognized the real meaning of the

\* The world was not then ready for *Le Père Hyacinthe*;—but the real gist of the matter is that Lippi did, openly and bravely, what the highest prelates in the Church did basely and in secret; also he loved, where they only lusted; and he has been proclaimed therefore by them—and too foolishly believed by us—to have been a shameful person. Of his true life, and the colours given to it, we will try to learn something tenable, before we end our work in Florence.

reports of Perugino's 'infidelity.' Botticelli, the pupil of the one, and the companion of the other, held the truths they taught him through sorrow as well as joy; and he is the greatest of the reformers, because he preached without blame; though the least known, because he died without victory.

I had hoped to be able to lay before you some better biography of him than the traditions of Vasari, of which I gave a short abstract some time back in *Fors Clavigera*; but as yet I have only added internal evidence to the popular story, the more important points of which I must review briefly. It will not waste your time if I read,—instead of merely giving you reference to,—the passages on which I must comment.

6. "His father, Mariano Filipepi, a Florentine citizen, brought him up with care, and caused him to be instructed in all such things as are usually taught to children before they choose a calling. But although the boy readily acquired whatever he wished to learn, yet was he constantly discontented; neither would he take any pleasure in reading, writing, or accounts, insomuch that the father, disturbed by the eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith, and considered a very

competent master of his art, to the intent that the boy might learn the same."

"He took no pleasure in reading, writing, nor accounts"! You will find the same thing recorded of Cimabue; but it is more curious when stated of a man whom I cite to you as typically a gentleman and a scholar. But remember, in those days, though there were not so many entirely correct books issued by the Religious Tract Society for boys to read, there were a great many more pretty things in the world for boys to see. The Val d'Arno was Pater-noster Row to purpose; their Father's Row, with books of His writing on the mountain shelves. And the lad takes to looking at things, and thinking about them, instead of reading about them,—which I commend to you, also, as much the more scholarly practice of the two. To the end, though he knows all about the celestial hierarchies, he is not strong in his letters, nor in his dialect. I asked Mr. Tyrrwhitt to help me through with a bit of his Italian the other day. Mr. Tyrrwhitt could only help me by suggesting that it was "Botticelli for so-and-so." And one of the minor reasons which induce me so boldly to attribute these sibyls to him, instead of Bandini, is that the lettering is so ill done. The engraver would assuredly have

had his lettering all right,—or at least neat. Botticelli blunders through it, scratches impatiently out when he goes wrong ; and as I told you there's no repentance in the engraver's trade, leaves all the blunders visible.

7. I may add one fact bearing on this question lately communicated to me.\* In the autumn of 1872 I possessed myself of an Italian book of pen drawings, some, I have no doubt, by Mantegna in his youth, others by Sandro himself. In examining these, I was continually struck by the comparatively feeble and blundering way in which the titles were written, while all the rest of the handling was really superb ; and still more surprised when, on the sleeves and hem of the robe of one of the principal figures of women, ("Helena rapita da Paris,") I found what seemed to be meant for inscriptions, intricately embroidered ; which nevertheless, though beautifully drawn, I could not read. In copying Botticelli's Zipporah this spring, I found the border of her robe wrought with characters of the same kind, which a young painter, working with me, who already knows the minor secrets of Italian art better than I,†

\* I insert supplementary notes, when of importance, in the text of the lecture, for the convenience of the general reader.

† Mr. Charles F. Murray.

assures me are letters,—and letters of a language hitherto undeciphered.

8. "There was at that time a close connexion and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters, wherefore Sandro, who possessed considerable ingenuity, and was strongly disposed to the arts of design, became enamoured of painting, and resolved to devote himself entirely to that vocation. He acknowledged his purpose at once to his father; and the latter, who knew the force of his inclination, took him accordingly to the Carmelite monk, Fra Filippo, who was a most excellent painter of that time, with whom he placed him to study the art, as Sandro himself had desired. Devoting himself thereupon entirely to the vocation he had chosen, Sandro so closely followed the directions, and imitated the manner, of his master, that Fra Filippo conceived a great love for him, and instructed him so effectually, that Sandro rapidly attained to such a degree in art as none would have predicted for him."

I have before pointed out to you the importance of training by the goldsmith. Sandro got more good of it, however, than any of the other painters so educated,—being enabled by it to use gold for light to colour, in a glowing harmony never reached with equal perfection, and rarely

attempted, in the later schools. To the last, his paintings are partly treated as work in niello; and he names himself, in perpetual gratitude, from this first artizan master. Nevertheless, the fortunate fellow finds, at the right moment, another, even more to his mind, and is obedient to him through his youth, as to the other through his childhood. And this master loves him; and instructs him 'so effectually,'—in grinding colours, do you suppose, only; or in laying of lines only; or in anything more than these?

9. I will tell you what Lippi must have taught any boy whom he loved. First, humility, and to live in joy and peace, injuring no man—if such innocence might be. Nothing is so manifest in every face by him, as its gentleness and rest. Secondly, to finish his work perfectly, and in such temper that the angels might say of it—not he himself—'Iste perfecit opus.' Do you remember what I told you in the Eagle's Nest, that true humility was in hoping that angels might sometimes admire *our* work; not in hoping that we should ever be able to admire *theirs*? Thirdly,—a little thing it seems, but was a great one,—love of flowers. No one draws such lilies or such daisies as Lippi. Botticelli beat him afterwards in roses, but never in lilies. Fourthly,

due honour for classical tradition. Lippi is the only religious painter who dresses John Baptist in the camel-skin, as the Greeks dressed Heracles in the lion's,—over the head. Lastly, and chiefly of all,—Le Père Hyacinthe taught his pupil certain views about the doctrine of the Church, which the boy thought of more deeply than his tutor, and that by a great deal; and Master Sandro presently got himself into such question for painting heresy, that if he had been as hotheaded as he was true-hearted, he would soon have come to bad end by the tar-barrel. But he is so sweet and so modest, that nobody is frightened; so clever, that everybody is pleased: and at last, actually the Pope sends for him to paint his own private chapel,—where the first thing my young gentleman does, mind you, is to paint the devil, in a monk's dress, tempting Christ! The sauciest thing, out and out, done in the history of the Reformation, it seems to me; yet so wisely done, and with such true respect otherwise shown for what was sacred in the Church, that the Pope didn't mind: and all went on as merrily as marriage bells.

10. I have anticipated, however, in telling you this, the proper course of his biography, to which I now return.



"While still a youth he painted the figure of Fortitude, among those pictures of the Virtues which Antonio and Pietro Pollaiuolo were executing in the Mercatanzia, or Tribunal of Commerce, in Florence. In Santo Spirito, a church of the same city, he painted a picture for the chapel of the Bardi family: this work he executed with great diligence, and finished it very successfully, depicting certain olive and palm trees therein with extraordinary care."

It is by a beautiful chance that the first work of his, specified by his Italian biographer, should be the Fortitude.\* Note also what is said of his tree drawing.

"Having, in consequence of this work, obtained much credit and reputation, Sandro was appointed by the Guild of Porta Santa Maria to paint a picture in San Marco, the subject of which is the Coronation of Our Lady, who is surrounded by a choir of angels—the whole extremely well designed, and finished by the artist with infinite care. He executed various works in the Medici Palace for the elder Lorenzo, more particularly a figure of Pallas on a shield wreathed with vine branches, whence flames are proceeding: this he painted of the size of life. A San Sebastiano was also among the most remarkable

\* Some notice of this picture is given at the beginning of my third Morning in Florence, 'Before the Soldan.'

of the works executed for Lorenzo. In the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, in Florence, is a *Pietà*, with small figures, by this master: this is a very beautiful work. For different houses in various parts of the city Sandro painted many pictures of a round form, with numerous figures of women undraped. Of these there are still two examples at Castello, a villa of the Duke Cosimo,—one representing the birth of Venus, who is borne to earth by the Loves and Zephyrs; the second also presenting the figure of Venus crowned with flowers by the Graces: she is here intended to denote the Spring, and the allegory is expressed by the painter with extraordinary grace."

Our young Reformer enters, it seems, on a very miscellaneous course of study; the Coronation of Our Lady; St. Sebastian; Pallas in vine-leaves; and Venus,—without fig-leaves. Not wholly Calvinistic, Fra Filippo's teaching seems to have been! All the better for the boy—being such a boy as he was: but I cannot in this lecture enter farther into my reasons for saying so.

11. Vasari, however, has shot far ahead in telling us of this picture of the Spring, which is one of Botticelli's completest works. Long before he was able to paint Greek nymphs, he had done his best in idealism of greater spirits; and, while

yet quite a youth, painted, at Castello, the Assumption of Our Lady, with "the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the martyrs, the confessors, the doctors, the virgins, and the hierarchies!"

Imagine this subject proposed to a young, (or even old) British artist, for his next appeal to public sensation at the Academy! But do you suppose that the young British artist is wiser and more civilized than Lippi's scholar, because his only idea of a patriarch is of a man with a long beard; of a doctor, the M.D. with the brass plate over the way; and of a virgin, Miss — of the — theatre?

Not that even Sandro was able, according to Vasari's report, to conduct the entire design himself. The proposer of the subject assisted him; and they made some modifications in the theology, which brought them both into trouble—so early did Sandro's innovating work begin, into which subjects our gossiping friend waives unnecessary inquiry, as follows.

"But although this picture is exceedingly beautiful, and ought to have put envy to shame, yet there were found certain malevolent and censorious persons who, not being able to affix any other blame to the work, declared that Matteo and Sandro had erred gravely in that matter, and had fallen into grievous heresy.

"Now, whether this be true or not, let none expect the judgment of that question from me: it shall suffice me to note that the figures executed by Sandro in that work are entirely worthy of praise; and that the pains he took in depicting those circles of the heavens must have been very great, to say nothing of the angels mingled with the other figures, or of the various foreshortenings, all which are designed in a very good manner.

"About this time Sandro received a commission to paint a small picture with figures three parts of a braccio high,—the subject an Adoration of the Magi.

"It is indeed a most admirable work: the composition, the design, and the colouring are so beautiful that every artist who examines it is astonished; and, at the time, it obtained so great a name in Florence, and other places, for the master, that Pope Sixtus IV. having erected the chapel built by him in his palace at Rome, and desiring to have it adorned with paintings, commanded that Sandro Botticelli should be appointed Superintendent of the work."

12. Vasari's words, "about this time," are evidently wrong. It must have been many and many a day after he painted Matteo's picture that he took such high standing in Florence as to receive the master-

ship of the works in the Pope's chapel at Rome. Of his position and doings there, I will tell you presently; meantime, let us complete the story of his life.

"By these works Botticelli obtained great honour and reputation among the many competitors who were labouring with him, whether Florentines or natives of other cities, and received from the Pope a considerable sum of money; but this he consumed and squandered totally, during his residence in Rome, where he lived without due care, as was his habit."

13. Well, but one would have liked to hear *how* he squandered his money, and whether he was without care—of other things than money.

It is just possible, Master Vasari, that Botticelli may have laid out his money at higher interest than you know of; meantime, he is advancing in life and thought, and becoming less and less comprehensible to his biographer. And at length, having got rid, somehow, of the money he received from the Pope; and finished the work he had to do, and uncovered it,—free in conscience, and empty in purse, he returned to Florence, where, "being a sophistical person, he made a comment on a part of Dante, and drew the *Inferno*, and put it in engraving, in which he consumed much time; and not working

for this reason, brought infinite disorder into his affairs."

14. Unpaid work, this engraving of Dante, you perceive,—consuming much time also, and not appearing to Vasari to be work at all. It is but a short sentence, gentlemen,—this, in the old edition of Vasari, and obscurely worded,—a very foolish person's contemptuous report of a thing to him totally incomprehensible. But the thing itself is out-and-out the most important fact in the history of the religious art of Italy. I can show you its significance in not many more words than have served to record it.

Botticelli had been painting in Rome; and had expressly chosen to represent there,—being Master of Works, in the presence of the Defender of the Faith,—the foundation of the Mosaic law; to his mind the Eternal Law of God,—that law of which modern Evangelicals sing perpetually their own original psalm, "Oh, how hate I Thy law! it is my abomination all the day." Returning to Florence, he reads Dante's vision of the Hell created by its violation. He knows that the pictures he has painted in Rome cannot be understood by the people; they are exclusively for the best trained scholars in the Church. Dante, on the other hand, can only be read in manuscript; but the people

could and would understand *his* lessons, if they were pictured in accessible and enduring form. He throws all his own lauded work aside,—all for which he is most honoured, and in which his now matured and magnificent skill is as easy to him as singing to a perfect musician. And he sets himself to a servile and despised labour,—his friends mocking him, his resources failing him, infinite ‘disorder’ getting into his affairs—of this world.

15. Never such another thing happened in Italy any more. Botticelli engraved her Pilgrim’s Progress for her, putting himself in prison to do it. She would not read it when done. Raphael and Marc Antonio were the theologians for her money. Pretty Madonnas, and satyrs with abundance of tail,—let our pilgrim’s progress be in *these* directions, if you please.

Botticelli’s own pilgrimage, however, was now to be accomplished triumphantly, with such crowning blessings as Heaven might grant to him. In spite of his friends and his disordered affairs, he went his own obstinate way; and found another man’s words worth engraving as well as Dante’s; not without perpetuating, also, what he deemed worthy of his own.

16. What would that be, think you? His chosen

works before the Pope in Rome?—his admired Madonnas in Florence?—his choirs of angels and thickets of flowers? Some few of these—yes, as you shall presently see; but “the best attempt of this kind from his hand is the Triumph of Faith, by Fra Girolamo Savonarola, of Ferrara, of whose sect our artist was so zealous a partisan that he totally abandoned painting, and not having any other means of living, he fell into very great difficulties. But his attachment to the party he had adopted increased; he became what was then called a *Piagnone*, or Mourner, and abandoned all labour; insomuch that, finding himself at length become old, being also very poor, he must have died of hunger had he not been supported by Lorenzo de’ Medici, for whom he had worked at the small hospital of Volterra and other places, who assisted him while he lived, as did other friends and admirers of his talents.”

17. In such dignity and independence—having employed his talents not wholly at the orders of the dealer—died, a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de’ Medici, the President of that high academy of art in Rome, whose Academicians were Perugino, Ghirlandajo, Angelico, and Signorelli; and whose students, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

‘A worthless, ill-conducted fellow on the whole,



thinks Vasari, 'with a crazy fancy for scratching on copper.'

Well, here are some of the scratches for you to see; only, first, I must ask you seriously for a few moments to consider what the two powers were, which, with this iron pen of his, he has set himself to reprove.

18. Two great forms of authority reigned over the entire civilized world, confessedly, and by name, in the middle ages. They reign over it still, and must for ever, though at present very far from confessed; and, in most places, ragingly denied.

The first power is that of the Teacher, or true Father; the Father 'in God.' It may be—happy the children to whom it is—the actual father also; and whose parents have been their tutors. But, for the most part, it will be some one else who teaches them, and moulds their minds and brain. All such teaching, when true, being from above, and coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, is properly that of the holy Catholic '*ἐκκλησια*,' council, church, or papacy, of many fathers in God, not of one. Eternally powerful and divine; revered of all humble and lowly scholars, in Jewry, in Greece, in Rome, in Gaul, in England, and beyond sea, from Arctic zone to zone.

The second authority is the power of National Law, enforcing justice in conduct by due reward and punishment. Power vested necessarily in magistrates capable of administering it with mercy and equity; whose authority, be it of many or few, is again divine, as proceeding from the King of kings, and was acknowledged, throughout civilized Christendom, as the power of the Holy Empire, or Holy Roman Empire, because first throned in Rome; but it is for ever also acknowledged, namelessly, or by name, by all loyal, obedient, just, and humble hearts, which truly desire that, whether for them or against them, the eternal equities and dooms of Heaven should be pronounced and executed; and as the wisdom or word of their Father should be taught, so the will of their Father should be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

19. You all here know what contention, first, and then what corruption and dishonour, had paralyzed these two powers before the days of which we now speak. Reproof, and either reform or rebellion, became necessary everywhere. The northern Reformers, Holbein, and Luther, and Henry, and Cromwell, set themselves to their task rudely, and, it might seem, carried it through. The southern Reformers, Dante, and Savonarola, and Botticelli, set hand to their task reverently, and, it seemed, did not by any

means carry it through. But the end is not yet.

20. Now I shall endeavour to-day to set before you the art of Botticelli, especially as exhibiting the modesty of great imagination trained in reverence, which characterized the southern Reformers; and as opposed to the immodesty of narrow imagination, trained in self-trust, which characterized the northern Reformers.

‘The modesty of great *imagination* ;’ that is to say, of the power which conceives all things in true relation, and not only as they affect ourselves. I can show you this most definitely by taking one example of the modern, and unschooled temper, in Bewick;\* and setting it beside Botticelli’s treatment of the same subject of thought,—namely, the meaning of war, and the reforms necessary in the carrying on of war.

21. Both the men are entirely at one in their purpose. They yearn for peace and justice to rule over the earth, instead of the sword; but see how differently they will say what is in their hearts to the people they address. To Bewick, war was more an

\* I am bitterly sorry for the pain which my partial references to the man whom of all English artists whose histories I have read, I most esteem, have given to one remaining member of his family. I hope my meaning may be better understood after she has seen the close of this lecture.

absurdity than it was a horror: he had not seen battle-fields, still less had he read of them, in ancient days. He cared nothing about heroes,—Greek, Roman, or Norman. What he knew, and saw clearly, was that Farmer Hodge's boy went out of the village one holiday afternoon, a fine young fellow, rather drunk, with a coloured riband in his hat; and came back, ten years afterwards, with one leg, one eye, an old red coat, and a tobacco-pipe in the pocket of it. That is what he has got to say, mainly. So, for the pathetic side of the business, he draws you two old soldiers meeting as bricklayers' labourers; and for the absurd side of it, he draws a stone, sloping sideways with age, in a bare field, on which you can just read, out of a long inscription, the words "glorious victory;" but no one is there to read them,—only a jackass, who uses the stone to scratch himself against.

22. Now compare with this Botticelli's reproof of war. *He* had seen it, and often; and between noble persons;—knew the temper in which the noblest knights went out to it;—knew the strength, the patience, the glory, and the grief of it. He would fain see his Florence in peace; and yet he knows that the wisest of her citizens are her bravest soldiers. So he seeks for the ideal of a soldier, and for the greatest glory of war, that in the presence of these

he may speak reverently, what he must speak. He does not go to Greece for his hero. He is not sure that even her patriotic wars were always right. But, by his religious faith, he cannot doubt the nobleness of the soldier who put the children of Israel in possession of their promised land, and to whom the sign of the consent of heaven was given by its pausing light in the valley of Ajalon. Must then setting sun and risen moon stay, he thinks, only to look upon slaughter? May no soldier of Christ bid them stay otherwise than so? He draws Joshua, but quitting his hold of the sword: its hilt rests on his bent knee; and he kneels before the sun, not commands it; and this is his prayer:—

“Oh, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone rulest always in eternity, and who correctest all our wanderings,—Giver of melody to the choir of the angels, listen Thou a little to our bitter grief, and come and rule us, oh Thou highest King, with Thy love which is so sweet!”

Is not that a little better, and a little wiser, than Bewick's jackass? Is it not also better, and wiser, than the sneer of modern science? ‘What great men are we!—we, forsooth, can make almanacs, and know that the earth turns round. Joshua indeed! Let us have no more talk of the old-clothesman.’

All Bewick's simplicity is in that ; but none of Bewick's understanding.

23. I pass to the attack made by Botticelli upon the guilt of wealth. So I had at first written ; but I should rather have written, the appeal made by him against the cruelty of wealth, then first attaining the power it has maintained to this day.

The practice of receiving interest had been confined, until this fifteenth century, with contempt and malediction, to the profession, so styled, of usurers, or to the Jews. The merchants of Augsburg introduced it as a convenient and pleasant practice among Christians also ; and insisted that it was decorous and proper even among respectable merchants. In the view of the Christian Church of their day, they might more reasonably have set themselves to defend adultery.\* However, they appointed Dr. John Eck, of Ingoldstadt, to hold debates in all possible universities, at their expense, on the allowing of interest ; and as these Augsburgers had in Venice their special mart, Fondaco, called of the Germans, their new notions came into direct collision with old Venetian ones, and were much hindered by them, and all the more, because, in opposition to Dr. John Eck, there was preaching on the other side of the Alps. The

\* Read Ezekiel xviii.

Franciscans, poor themselves, preached mercy to the poor: one of them, Brother Marco of San Gallo, planned the 'Mount of Pity' for their defence, and the merchants of Venice set up the first in the world, against the German Fondaco. The dispute burned far on towards our own times. You perhaps have heard before of one Antonio, a merchant of Venice, who persistently retained the then obsolete practice of lending money gratis, and of the peril it brought him into with the usurers. But you perhaps did not before know why it was the flesh, or heart of flesh, in him, that they so hated.

24. Against this newly risen demon of authorized usury, Holbein and Botticelli went out to war together. Holbein, as we have partly seen in his designs for the Dance of Death, struck with all his soldier's strength.\* Botticelli uses neither satire nor reproach. He turns altogether away from the criminals; appeals only to heaven for defence against them. He engraves the design which, of all his work, must have cost him hardest toil in its execution,—the Virgin praying to her Son in heaven for pity upon the poor: "For these are also my children."† Underneath, are the seven works of Mercy; and in the

\* See also the account by Dr. Woltmann of the picture of the Triumph of Riches. 'Holbein and his Time,' p. 352.

† These words are engraved in the plate, as spoken by the Virgin.

midst of them, the building of the Mount of Pity : in the distance lies Italy, mapped in cape and bay, with the cities which had founded mounts of pity, —Venice in the distance, chief. Little seen, but engraved with the master's loveliest care, in the background there is a group of two small figures—the Franciscan brother kneeling, and an angel of Victory crowning him.

25. I call it an angel of Victory, observe, with assurance ; although there is no legend claiming victory, or distinguishing this angel from any other of those which adorn with crowns of flowers the nameless crowds of the blessed. For Botticelli has other ways of speaking than by written legends. I know by a glance at this angel that he has taken the action of it from a Greek coin ; and I know also that he had not, in his own exuberant fancy, the least need to copy the action of any figure whatever. So I understand, as well as if he spoke to me, that he expects me, if I am an educated gentleman, to recognize this particular action as a Greek angel's ; and to know that it is a temporal victory which it crowns.

26. And now farther, observe, that this classical learning of Botticelli's, received by him, as I told you, as a native element of his being, gives not only greater dignity and gentleness, but far wider range,



to his thoughts of Reformation. As he asks for pity from the cruel Jew to the *poor* Gentile, so he asks for pity from the proud Christian to the *untaught* Gentile. Nay, for more than pity, for fellowship, and acknowledgment of equality before God. The learned men of his age in general brought back the Greek mythology as anti-Christian. But Botticelli and Perugino, as pre-Christian; nor only as pre-Christian, but as the foundation of Christianity. But chiefly Botticelli, with perfect grasp of the Mosaic and classic theology, thought over and seized the harmonies of both; and he it was who gave the conception of that great choir of the prophets and sibyls, of which Michael Angelo, more or less ignorantly borrowing it in the Sistine Chapel, in great part lost the meaning, while he magnified the aspect.

27. For, indeed, all Christian and heathen mythology had alike become to Michael Angelo only a vehicle for the display of his own powers of drawing limbs and trunks: and having resolved, and made the world of his day believe, that all the glory of design lay in variety of difficult attitude, he flings the naked bodies about his ceiling with an upholsterer's ingenuity of appliance to the corners they could fit, but with total absence of any legible meaning. Nor do I suppose that one person in a million, even of those

who have some acquaintance with the earlier masters, takes patience in the Sistine Chapel to conceive the original design. But Botticelli's mastership of the works evidently was given to him as a theologian, even more than as a painter; and the moment when he came to Rome to receive it, you may hold for the crisis of the Reformation in Italy. The main effort to save her priesthood was about to be made by her wisest Reformer,—face to face with the head of her Church,—not in contest with him, but in the humblest subjection to him; and in adornment of his own chapel for his own delight, and more than delight, if it might be.

28. Sandro brings to work, not under him, but with him, the three other strongest and worthiest men he knows, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Luca Signorelli. There is evidently entire fellowship in thought between Botticelli and Perugino. They two together plan the whole; and Botticelli, though the master, yields to Perugino the principal place, the end of the chapel, on which is to be the Assumption of the Virgin. It was Perugino's favourite subject, done with his central strength; assuredly the crowning work of his life, and of lovely Christian art in Europe.

Michael Angelo painted it out, and drew devils and dead bodies all over the wall instead. But there

remains to us, happily, the series of subjects designed by Botticelli to lead up to this lost one.

29. He came, I said, not to attack, but to restore the Papal authority. To show the power of inherited honour, and universal claim of divine law, in the Jewish and Christian Church,—the law delivered first by Moses; then, in final grace and truth, by Christ.

He designed twelve great pictures, each containing some twenty figures the size of life, and groups of smaller ones scarcely to be counted. Twelve pictures,—six to illustrate the giving of the law by Moses; and six, the ratification and completion of it by Christ. Event by event, the jurisprudence of each dispensation is traced from dawn to close in this correspondence.

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Covenant of Circumcision.          | 7. Covenant of Baptism.                    |
| 2. Entrance on his Ministry by Moses. | 8. Entrance on His Ministry by Christ.     |
| 3. Moses by the Red Sea.              | 9. Peter and Andrew by the Sea of Galilee. |
| 4. Delivery of Law on Sinai.          | 10. Sermon on Mount.                       |
| 5. Destruction of Korah.              | 11. Giving Keys to St. Peter.              |
| 6. Death of Moses.                    | 12. Last Supper.                           |

Of these pictures, Sandro painted three himself, Perugino three, and the Assumption; Ghirlandajo one, Signorelli one, and Rosselli four.\* I believe

\* Cosimo Rosselli, especially chosen by the Pope for his gay colouring.

that Sandro intended to take the roof also, and had sketched out the main succession of its design ; and that the prophets and sibyls which he meant to paint, he drew first small, and engraved his drawings afterwards, that some part of the work might be, at all events, thus communicable to the world outside of the Vatican.

30. It is not often that I tell you my beliefs ; but I am forced here, for there are no dates to found more on. Is it not wonderful that among all the infinite mass of fool's thoughts about the "majestic works of Michael Angelo" in the Sistine Chapel, no slightly more rational person has ever asked what the chapel was first meant to be like, and how it was to be roofed ?

Nor can I assure myself, still less you, that all these prophets and sibyls are Botticelli's. Of many there are two engravings, with variations : some are inferior in parts, many altogether. He signed none ; never put grand tablets with 'S. B.' into his skies ; had other letters than those to engrave, and no time to spare. I have chosen out of the series three of the sibyls, which have, I think, clear internal evidence of being his ; and these you shall compare with Michael Angelo's. But first I must put you in mind what the sibyls were.

31. As the prophets represent the voice of God

in man, the sibyls represent the voice of God in nature. They are properly all forms of one sibyl, *Διὸς Βουλή*, the counsel of God ; and the chief one, at least in the Roman mind, was the Sibyl of Cumæe. From the traditions of her, the Romans, and we through them, received whatever lessons the myth, or fact, of sibyl power has given to mortals.

How much have you received, or may you yet receive, think you, of that teaching ? I call it the myth, or fact ; but remember that, *as* a myth, it *is* a fact. This story has concentrated whatever good there is in the imagination of visionary powers in women, inspired by nature only. The traditions of witch and gipsy are partly its offshoots. You despise both, perhaps. But can you, though in utmost pride of your supreme modern wisdom, suppose that the character—say, even of so poor and far-fallen a sibyl as Meg Merrilies—is only the coinage of Scott's brain ; or that, even being no more, it is valueless ? Admit the figure of the Cumæan Sibyl, in like manner, to be the coinage only of Virgil's brain. As such, it, and the words it speaks, are yet facts in which we may find use, if we are reverent to them.

To me, personally, (I must take your indulgence for a moment to speak wholly of myself,) they have been of the truest service—quite material and indisputable.

I am writing on St. John's Day, in the monastery of Assisi; and I had no idea whatever, when I sat down to my work this morning, of saying any word of what I am now going to tell you. I meant only to expand and explain a little what I said in my lecture about the Florentine engraving. But it seems to me now that I had better tell you what the Cumaean Sibyl has actually done for me.

32. In 1871, partly in consequence of chagrin at the Revolution in Paris, and partly in great personal sorrow, I was struck by acute inflammatory illness at Matlock, and reduced to a state of extreme weakness; lying at one time unconscious for some hours, those about me having no hope of my life. I have no doubt that the immediate cause of the illness was simply, eating when I was not hungry; so that modern science would acknowledge nothing in the whole business but an extreme and very dangerous form of indigestion; and entirely deny any interference of the Cumaean Sibyl in the matter.

I once heard a sermon by Dr. Guthrie, in Edinburgh, upon the wickedness of fasting. It was very eloquent and ingenious, and finely explained the superiority of the Scotch Free Church to the benighted Catholic Church, in that the Free Church saw no merit in fasting. And there was no mention, from beginning to end of the sermon, of even the

existence of such texts as Daniel i. 12, or Matthew vi. 16.

Without the smallest merit, I admit, in fasting, I was nevertheless reduced at Matlock to a state very near starvation ; and could not rise from my pillow, without being lifted, for some days. And in the first clearly pronounced stage of recovery, when the perfect powers of spirit had returned, while the body was still as weak as it well could be, I had three dreams, which made a great impression on me ; for in ordinary health my dreams are supremely ridiculous, if not unpleasant ; and in ordinary conditions of illness, very ugly, and always without the slightest meaning. But these dreams were all distinct and impressive, and had much meaning, if I chose to take it.

33. The first \* was of a Venetian fisherman, who wanted me to follow him down into some water which I thought was too deep ; but he called me on, saying he had something to show me ; so I followed him ; and presently, through an opening, as if in the arsenal wall, he showed me the bronze horses of St. Mark's, and said, ' See, the horses are putting on their harness.'

The second was of a preparation at Rome, in St. Peter's, (or a vast hall as large as St. Peter's,) for the

\* I am not certain of their order at this distance of time.

exhibition of a religious drama. Part of the play was to be a scene in which demons were to appear in the sky ; and the stage servants were arranging grey fictitious clouds, and painted fiends, for it, under the direction of the priests. There was a woman dressed in black, standing at the corner of the stage watching them, having a likeness in her face to one of my own dead friends ; and I knew somehow that she was not that friend, but a spirit ; and she made me understand, without speaking, that I was to watch, for the play would turn out other than the priests expected. And I waited ; and when the scene came on, the clouds became real clouds, and the fiends real fiends, agitating them in slow quivering, wild and terrible, over the heads of the people and priests. I recollected distinctly, however, when I woke, only the figure of the black woman mocking the people, and of one priest in an agony of terror, with the sweat pouring from his brow, but violently scolding one of the stage servants for having failed in some ceremony, the omission of which, he thought, had given the devils their power.

The third dream was the most interesting and personal. Some one came to me to ask me to help in the deliverance of a company of Italian prisoners who were to be ransomed for money. I said I had no money. They answered, Yes, I had some that



belonged to me as a brother of St. Francis, if I would give it up. I said I did not know even that I *was* a brother of St. Francis; but I thought to myself, that perhaps the Franciscans of Fèsòle, whom I had helped to make hay in their field in 1845, had adopted me for one; only I didn't see how the consequence of that would be my having any money. However, I said they were welcome to whatever I had; and then I heard the voice of an Italian woman singing; and I have never heard such divine singing before nor since;—the sounds absolutely strong and real, and the melody altogether lovely. If I could have written it! But I could not even remember it when I woke,—only how beautiful it was.

34. Now these three dreams have, every one of them, been of much use to me since; or so far as they have failed to be useful, it has been my own fault, and not theirs; but the chief use of them at the time was to give me courage and confidence in myself, both in bodily distress, of which I had still not a little to bear; and worse, much mental anxiety about matters supremely interesting to me, which were turning out ill. And through all such trouble—which came upon me as I was recovering, as if it meant to throw me back into the grave,—I held out and recovered, repeating always to myself,

or rather having always murmured in my ears, at every new trial, one Latin line,

*Tu ne cede malis, sed contra fortior ito.*

Now I had got this line out of the tablet in the engraving of Raphael's vision, and had forgotten where it came from. And I thought I knew my sixth book of Virgil so well, that I never looked at it again while I was giving these lectures at Oxford, and it was only here at Assisi, the other day, wanting to look more accurately at the first scene by the lake Avernus, that I found I had been saved by the words of the Cumaean Sibyl.

35. "*Quam tua te Fortuna sinet,*" the completion of the sentence, has yet more and continual teaching in it for me now; as it has for all men. Her opening words, which have become hackneyed, and lost all present power through vulgar use of them, contain yet one of the most immortal truths ever yet spoken for mankind; and they will never lose their power of help for noble persons. But observe, both in that lesson, "*Facilis descensus Averni,*" etc.; and in the still more precious, because universal, one on which the strength of Rome was founded,—the burning of the books,—the Sibyl speaks only as the voice of Nature, and of her laws;—not as a divine helper, prevailing over death; but as a mortal



L'UTIMO MIE BARLAR FIE ZIVERACIE  
 PERO CHE GIOVITI ZONGIUVITI MI CANTI  
 DEL VENIMENTO DELLO RE DI PACIE  
 OGHICCI ZALVERA NOI TUTTI QVANTI  
 EPRENDERA CARNUMANA SIGLI PIACIE  
 E DETERMEZZI VMILAT TUTTI CHVANTI  
 LA MADRE PRENDE LVMILVERGINELLA  
 LA ZARA ZOPROGNI DONNA BELLA

VII.

For a time, and times.



THE



teacher warning us against it, and strengthening us for our mortal time ; but not for eternity. Of which lesson her own history is a part, and her habitation by the Avernus lake. She desires immortality, fondly and vainly, as we do ourselves. She receives, from the love of her *refused* lover, Apollo, not immortality, but length of life ;—her years to be as the grains of dust in her hand. And even this she finds was a false desire ; and her wise and holy desire at last is—to die. She wastes away ; becomes a shade only, and a voice. The Nations ask her, What wouldst thou ? She answers, Peace ; only let my last words be true. “L’ultimo mie parlar sie verace.”

36. Therefore, if anything is to be conceived, rightly, and chiefly, in the form of the Cumaean Sibyl, it must be of fading virginal beauty, of enduring patience, of far-looking into futurity. “For after my death there shall yet return,” she says, “another virgin.”

Jam redit et virgo ;—redeunt Saturnia regna,  
Ultima Cumaei venit jam carminis actas.

Here then is Botticelli’s Cumaean Sibyl. She is armed, for she is the prophetess of Roman fortitude ;—but her faded breast scarcely raises the corslet ; her hair floats, not falls, in waves like the

currents of a river,—the sign of enduring life; the light is full on her forehead: she looks into the distance as in a dream. It is impossible for art to gather together more beautifully or intensely every image which can express her true power, or lead us to understand her lesson.

37. Now you do not, I am well assured, know one of Michael Angelo's sibyls from another: unless perhaps the Delphian, whom of course he makes as beautiful as he can. But of this especially Italian propheticess, one would have thought he might, at least in some way, have shown that he knew the history, even if he did not understand it. She might have had more than one book, at all events, to burn. She might have had a stray leaf or two fallen at her feet. He could not indeed have painted her only as a voice; but his anatomical knowledge need not have hindered him from painting her virginal youth, or her wasting and watching age, or her inspired hope of a holier future.

38. Opposite,—fortunately, photograph from the figure itself, so that you can suspect me of no exaggeration,—is Michael Angelo's Cumæan Sibyl, wasting away. It is by a grotesque and most strange chance that he should have made the figure of this Sibyl, of all others in the chapel, the most fleshly and gross, even proceeding to the mon-



VIII.

The Nymph beloved of Apollo.

(MICHAEL ANGELLO.)



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1. The  
sailboat  
on the water  
in the foreground

strous licence of showing the nipples of the breast as if the dress were moulded over them like plaster. Thus he paints the poor nymph beloved of Apollo,—the clearest and queestliest in prophecy and command of all the sibyls,—as an ugly crone, with the arms of Goliath, poring down upon a single book.

39. There is one point of fine detail, however, in Botticelli's Cumæan Sibyl, and in the next I am going to show you, to explain which I must go back for a little while to the question of the direct relation of the Italian painters to the Greek. I don't like repeating in one lecture what I have said in another; but to save you the trouble of reference, must remind you of what I stated in my fourth lecture on Greek birds, when we were examining the adoption of the plume crests in armour, that the crest signifies command; but the diadem, *obedience*; and that every crown is primarily a diadem. It is the thing that binds, before it is the thing that honours.

Now all the great schools dwell on this symbolism. The long flowing hair is the symbol of life, and the *διάδημα* of the law restraining it. Royalty, or kingliness, over life, restraining and glorifying. In the extremity of restraint—in death, whether noble, as of death to Earth, or ignoble, as of death to Heaven, the *διάδημα* is fastened with the mort-cloth: "Bound

hand and foot with grave-clothes, and the face bound about with the napkin."

40. Now look back to the first Greek head I ever showed you, used as the type of archaic sculpture in Aratra Pentelici, and then look at the crown in Botticelli's *Astrologia*. It is absolutely the Greek form,—even to the peculiar oval of the forehead; while the diadem—the governing law—is set with appointed stars—to rule the destiny and thought. Then return to the Cumaean Sibyl. She, as we have seen, is the symbol of enduring life—almost immortal. The diadem is withdrawn from the forehead—reduced to a narrow fillet—here, and the hair thrown free.

41. From the Cumaean Sibyl's diadem, traced only by points, turn to that of the Hellespontic, (Plate 9, opposite). I do not know why Botticelli chose her for the spirit of prophecy in old age; but he has made this the most interesting plate of the series in the definiteness of its connection with the work from Dante, which becomes his own prophecy in old age. The fantastic yet solemn treatment of the gnarled wood occurs, as far as I know, in no other engravings but this, and the illustrations to Dante; and I am content to leave it, with little comment, for the reader's quiet study, as showing the exuberance of imagination which other







NELLA MIEZCOLA 2TANDO VIDI FARE  
 TANTO IVINA FANTINA GRANDONORE  
 QVALEN VERGINITA 2IVVOL 2ALVAE  
 EPERDIVINA GRACIA E22VO VALORE  
 DISCENDILEI EVIENANCARNARE  
 FIGEVLCHIEFFIA DITANTO 2PLEIDORE  
 EFFIE DIDDIO 2VO FIGIVOIVERACIE  
 CHE TTVT TOLZECOLNOZTRO POSSAMET CIL

# IX.

In the woods of Ida.









NELLA MIEZCOLA STANDO VIDI FARE  
TANTO IVIA FANTINA GRANDONORE  
QUALEN VERGINITA SIVVOL SALVA,  
EPERDIVINA GRACIA EZZO VALORE  
DISCENDILEI EVIENANCARNARE  
FIGEVOLCHEFFIA DITANTO ZPLENDORE  
EFFIE DIDDIO ZVO FIGIVOLVERACIE  
CHE TTVT TOLZECOLNOSTRO POSSANE CIG

men at this time in Italy allowed to waste itself in idle arabesque, restrained by Botticelli to his most earnest purposes; and giving the withered tree-trunks hewn for the rude throne of the aged prophetess, the same harmony with her fading spirit which the rose has with youth, or the laurel with victory. Also in its weird characters, you have the best example I can show you of the orders of decorative design which are especially expressible by engraving, and which belong to a group of art-instincts scarcely now to be understood, much less recovered, (the influence of modern naturalistic imitation being too strong to be conquered)—the instincts, namely, for the arrangement of pure line, in labyrinthine intricacy, through which the grace of order may give continual clue. The entire body of ornamental design, connected with writing, in the middle ages seems as if it were a sensible symbol, to the eye and brain, of the methods of error and recovery, the minglings of crooked with straight, and perverse with progressive, which constitute the great problem of human morals and fate; and when I chose the title for the collected series of these lectures, I hoped to have justified it by careful analysis of the methods of labyrinthine ornament, which, made sacred by Theseian traditions,\* and beginning in imitation

\* Callimachus, 'Delos,' 304, etc.

of physical truth, with the spiral waves of the waters of Babylon as the Assyrian carved them, entangled in their returns the eyes of men, on Greek vase and Christian manuscript—till they closed in the arabesques which sprang round the last luxury of Venice and Rome.

But the labyrinth of life itself, and its more and more interwoven occupation, become too manifold, and too difficult for me; and of the time wasted in the blind lanes of it, perhaps that spent in analysis or recommendation of the art to which men's present conduct makes them insensible, has been chiefly cast away. On the walls of the little room where I finally revise this lecture,\* hangs an old silken sampler of great-grandam's work: representing the domestic life of Abraham: chiefly the stories of Isaac and Ishmael. Sarah at her tent-door, watching, with folded arms, the dismissal of Hagar: above, in a wilderness full of fruit trees, birds, and butterflies, little Ishmael lying at the root of a tree, and the spent bottle under another; Hagar in prayer, and the angel appearing to her out of a wreathed line of gloomily undulating clouds, which, with a dark-rayed sun in the midst, surmount the entire composition in two arches, out of which descend shafts of (I suppose) beneficent rain; leaving,

\* In the Old King's Arms Hotel, Lancaster.

however, room, in the corner opposite to Ishmael's angel, for Isaac's, who stays Abraham in the sacrifice: the ram in the thicket, the squirrel in the plum tree above him, and the grapes, pears, apples, roses, and daisies of the foreground, being all wrought with involution of such ingenious needle-work as may well rank, in the patience, the natural skill, and the innocent pleasure of it, with the truest works of Florentine engraving. Nay; the actual tradition of many of the forms of ancient art is in many places evident,—as for instance in the spiral summits of the flames of the wood on the altar, which are like a group of first-springing fern. On the wall opposite is a smaller composition, representing Justice with her balance and sword, standing between the sun and moon, with a background of pinks, borage, and corncockle: a third is only a cluster of tulips and iris, with two Byzantine peacocks; but the spirits of Penelope and Ariadne reign vivid in all the work—and the richness of pleasurable fancy is as great still, in these silken labours, as in the marble arches and golden roof of the cathedral of Monreale.

But what is the use of explaining or analyzing it? Such work as this means the patience and simplicity of all feminine life; and can be produced, among *us* at least, no more. Gothic tracery itself, another of

the instinctive labyrinthine intricacies of old, though analyzed to its last section, has become now the symbol only of a foolish ecclesiastical sect, retained for their shibboleth, joyless and powerless for all good. The very labyrinth of the grass and flowers of our fields, though dissected to its last leaf, is yet bitten bare, or trampled to slime, by the Minotaur of our lust; and for the tracced spire of the poplar by the brook, we possess but the four-square furnace tower, to mingle its smoke with heaven's thunder-clouds.\*

We will look yet at one sampler more of the engraved work, done in the happy time when flowers were pure, youth simple, and imagination gay,—Botticelli's Libyan Sibyl.

Glance back first to the Hellespontic, noting the close fillet, and the cloth bound below the face, and then you will be prepared to understand the last I shall show you, and the loveliest of the southern Pythonesses.

\* A manufacturer wrote to me the other day, "We don't *want* to make smoke!" Who said they did?—a hired murderer does not want to commit murder, but does it for sufficient motive. (Even our shipowners don't want to drown their sailors; they will only do it for sufficient motive.) If the dirty creatures *did* want to make smoke, there would be more excuse for them: and that they are not clever enough to consume it, is no praise to them. A man who can't help his hiccough leaves the room: why do they not leave the England they pollute?

SIBYLLA LIBI  
CA

ECCE VENIENTEM DIEM  
ET LATENTIA APERIEN  
TEM TENEBIT GREMIO  
GENTIVM REGINA



LOI VERRA CHELLETTERNO SIGNORE  
LUME DARA ALIE COSE NASCOSE  
ELEGAMI ISCORADELNOSTROERRORE  
FARA LESINAGOGELUMINOS E  
ESOLVERA LELABRAALPECHATORE  
EFIE STADORA DITVTE LECHOSE  
INGRENBO ALLA REINADELLE GENTE  
SEDRAQUESTORE SANTO EVNIENTE

X.

Grass of the Desert.

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12. *Man and the Environment*

42. A less deep thinker than Botticelli would have made her parched with thirst, and burnt with heat. But the voice of God, through nature, to the Arab or the Moor, is not in the thirst, but in the fountain,—not in the desert, but in the grass of it. And this Libyan Sibyl is the spirit of wild grass and flowers, springing in desolate places.

You see, her diadem is a wreath of them ; but the blossoms of it are not fastening enough for her hair, though it is not long yet—(she is only in reality a Florentine girl of fourteen or fifteen)—so the little darling knots it under her ears, and then makes herself a necklace of it. But though flowing hair and flowers are wild and pretty, Botticelli had not, in these only, got the power of Spring marked to his mind. Any girl might wear flowers ; but few, for ornament, would be likely to wear grass. So the Sibyl shall have grass in her diadem ; not merely interwoven and bending, but springing and strong. You thought it ugly and grotesque at first, did not you ? It was made so, because precisely what Botticelli wanted you to look at.

But that's not all. This conical cap of hers, with one bead at the top,—considering how fond the Florentines are of graceful head-dresses, this seems a strange one for a young girl. But, exactly

as I know the angel of Victory to be Greek, at his Mount of Pity, so I know this head-dress to be taken from a Greek coin, and to be meant for a Greek symbol. It is the Petasus of Hermes—the mist of morning over the dew. Lastly, what will the Libyan Sibyl say to you? The letters are large on her tablet. Her message is the oracle from the temple of the Dew: "The dew of thy birth is as the womb of the morning."—"Ecce venientem diem, et latentia aperientem, tenebit gremio gentium regina."

43. Why the daybreak came not then, nor yet has come, but only a deeper darkness; and why there is now neither queen nor king of nations, but every man doing that which is right in his own eyes, I would fain go on, partly to tell you, and partly to meditate with you: but it is not our work for to-day. The issue of the Reformation which these great painters, the scholars of Dante, began, we may follow, farther, in the study to which I propose to lead you, of the lives of Cimabue and Giotto, and the relation of their work at Assisi to the chapel and chambers of the Vatican.

44. To-day let me finish what I have to tell you of the style of southern engraving. What sudden bathos in the sentence, you think! So contemptible the question of style, then, in painting, though not

in literature? You study the 'style' of Homer; the style, perhaps, of Isaiah; the style of Horace, and of Massillon. Is it so vain to study the style of Botticelli?

In all cases, it is equally vain, if you think of their style first. But know their purpose, and then, their way of speaking is worth thinking of. These apparently unfinished and certainly unfilled outlines of the Florentine,—clumsy work, as Vasari thought them,—as Mr. Otley and most of our English amateurs still think them,—are these good or bad engraving?

You may ask now, comprehending their motive, with some hope of answering or being answered rightly. And the answer is, They are the finest gravers' work ever done yet by human hand. You may teach, by process of discipline and of years, any youth of good artistic capacity to engrave a plate in the modern manner; but only the noblest passion, and the tenderest patience, will ever engrave one line like these of Sandro Botticelli.

45. Passion, and patience! Nay, even these you may have to-day in England, and yet both be in vain. Only a few years ago, in one of our northern iron-foundries, a workman of intense power and natural art-faculty set himself to learn engraving;—

made his own tools; gave all the spare hours of his laborious life to learn their use; learnt it; and engraved a plate which, in manipulation, no professional engraver would be ashamed of. He engraved his blast furnace, and the casting of a beam of a steam engine. This, to him, was the power of God, —it was his life. No greater earnestness was ever given by man to promulgate a Gospel. Nevertheless, the engraving is absolutely worthless. The blast furnace *is not* the power of God; and the life of the strong spirit was as much consumed in the flames of it, as ever driven slave's by the burden and heat of the day.

How cruel to say so, if he yet lives, you think! No, my friends; the cruelty will be in you, and the guilt, if, having been brought here to learn that God is your Light, you yet leave the blast furnace to be the only light of England.

It has been, as I said in the note above (p. 191), with extreme pain that I have hitherto limited my notice of our own great engraver and moralist, to the points in which the disadvantages of English art-teaching made him inferior to his trained Florentine rival. But, that these disadvantages were powerless to arrest or ignobly depress him; —that however failing in grace and scholarship, he should never fail in truth or vitality; and that

the precision of his unerring hand \*—his inevitable eye—and his rightly judging heart—should place him in the first rank of the great artists not of England only, but of all the world and of all time:—that *this* was possible to him, was simply because he lived a *country* life. Bewick himself, Botticelli himself, Apelles himself, and twenty times Apelles, condemned to slavery in the hell-fire of the iron furnace, could have done—NOTHING. Absolute paralysis of all high human faculty *must* result from labour near fire. The poor engraver of the piston-rod had faculties—not like Bewick's, for if he had had those, he never would have endured the degradation; but assuredly, (I know this by his work,) faculties high enough to have made him one of the most accomplished figure painters of his age. And they are scorched out of him, as the sap from the grass in the oven: while on his Northumberland hill-sides, Bewick grew into as stately life as their strongest pine.

And therefore, in words of his, telling consummate and unchanging truth concerning the life, honour, and happiness of England, and bearing directly on the points of difference between class

\* I know no drawing so subtle as Bewick's, since the fifteenth century, except Holbein's and Turner's. I have been greatly surprised lately by the exquisite water-colour work in some of Stothard's smaller vignettes; but he cannot set the line like Turner or Bewick.

and class which I have not dwelt on without need, I will bring these lectures to a close.

"I have always, through life, been of opinion that there is no business of any kind that can be compared to that of a man who farms his own land. It appears to me that every earthly pleasure, with health, is within his reach. But numbers of these men (the old statesmen) were grossly ignorant, and in exact proportion to that ignorance they were sure to be offensively proud. This led them to attempt appearing above their station, which hastened them on to their ruin; but, indeed, this disposition and this kind of conduct invariably leads to such results. There were many of these lairds on Tyneside; as well as many who held their lands on the tenure of 'suit and service,' and were nearly on the same level as the lairds. Some of the latter lost their lands (not fairly, I think) in a way they could not help; many of the former, by their misdirected pride and folly, were driven into towns, to slide away into nothingness, and to sink into oblivion, while their 'ha' houses' (halls), that ought to have remained in their families from generation to generation, have mouldered away. I have always felt extremely grieved to see the ancient mansions of many of the country gentlemen, from somewhat similar causes, meet with a similar fate. The gentry should, in an especial manner,

prove by their conduct that they are guarded against showing any symptom of foolish pride, at the same time that they soar above every meanness, and that their conduct is guided by truth, integrity, and patriotism. If they wish the people to partake with them in these good qualities, they must set them the example, without which no real respect can ever be paid to them. Gentlemen ought never to forget the respectable station they hold in society, and that they are the natural guardians of public morals and may with propriety be considered as the head and the heart of the country, while 'a bold peasantry' are, in truth, the arms, the sinews, and the strength of the same; but when these last are degraded, they soon become dispirited and mean, and often dishonest and useless."

\* \* \* \* \*

"This singular and worthy man\* was perhaps the

\* Gilbert Gray, bookbinder. I have to correct the inaccurate—and very harmfully inaccurate, expression which I used of Bewick, in Love's *Meinie*, 'a printer's lad at Newcastle.' His first master was a goldsmith and engraver, else he could never have been an artist. I am very heartily glad to make this correction, which establishes another link of relation between Bewick and Botticelli; but my error was partly caused by the impression which the above description of his "most invaluable friend" made on me, when I first read it.

Much else that I meant to correct, or promised to explain, in this lecture, must be deferred to the Appendix; the superiority of the Tuscan to the Greek Aphrodite I may perhaps, even at last, leave the



most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings. This was also the case with a number of

reader to admit or deny as he pleases, having more important matters of debate on hand. But as I mean only to play with Proserpina during the spring, I will here briefly anticipate a statement I mean in the Appendix to enforce, namely, of the extreme value of coloured copies by hand, of paintings whose excellence greatly consists in colour, as auxiliary to engravings of them. The prices now given without hesitation for nearly worthless original drawings by fifth-rate artists, would obtain for the misguided buyers, in something like a proportion of ten to one, most precious copies of drawings which can only be represented at all in engraving by entire alteration of their treatment, and abandonment of their finest purposes. I feel this so strongly that I have given my best attention, during upwards of ten years, to train a copyist to perfect fidelity in rendering the work of Turner; and having now succeeded in enabling him to produce facsimiles so close as to look like replicas, facsimiles which I must sign with my own name and his, in the very work of them, to prevent their being sold for real Turner vignettes, I can obtain no custom for him, and am obliged to leave him to make his bread by any power of captivation his original sketches may possess in the eyes of a public which maintains a nation of copyists in Rome, but is content with black and white renderings of great English art; though there is scarcely one cultivated English gentleman or lady who has not been twenty times in the Vatican, for once that they have been in the National Gallery.

young men who might be considered as his pupils ; many of whom, I have no doubt, he directed into the paths of truth and integrity, and who revered his memory through life. He rose early to work, lay down when he felt weary, and rose again when refreshed. His diet was of the simplest kind ; and he eat when hungry, and drank when dry, without paying regard to meal-times. By steadily pursuing this mode of life he was enabled to accumulate sums of money—from ten to thirty pounds. This enabled him to get books, of an entertaining and moral tendency, printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every possible means, to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society. I have often discovered that he did not overlook ingenious mechanics, whose misfortunes—perhaps mismanagement—had led them to a lodging in Newgate. To these he directed his compassionate eye, and for the deserving (in his estimation), he paid their debt, and set them at liberty. He felt hurt at seeing the hands of an ingenious man tied up in prison, where they were of no use either to himself or to the community. This worthy man had been educated for a priest ; but he would say to me, ‘ Of a “trouth,” Thomas, I did not like their ways.’ So he gave up the thoughts of being a

priest, and bent his way from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, where he engaged himself to Allan Ramsay, the poet, then a bookseller at the latter place, in whose service he was both shopman and bookbinder. From Edinburgh he came to Newcastle. Gilbert had had a liberal education bestowed upon him. He had read a great deal, and had reflected upon what he had read. This, with his retentive memory, enabled him to be a pleasant and communicative companion. I lived in habits of intimacy with him to the end of his life; and, when he died, I, with others of his friends, attended his remains to the grave at the Ballast Hills."

And what graving on the sacred cliffs of Egypt ever honoured them, as that grass-dimmed furrow does the mounds of our Northern land?

THE END.

28 GEN 18. 6

## NOTES.

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I. The following letter, from one of my most faithful readers, corrects an important piece of misinterpretation in the text. The waving of the reins must be only in sign of the fluctuation of heat round the Sun's own chariot :—

“Spring Field, Ambleside,

“February 11, 1875.

“Dear Mr. Ruskin,—Your fifth lecture on Engraving I have to hand.

“Sandro intended those wavy lines meeting under the Sun's right \* hand, (Plate V.) primarily, no doubt, to represent the four ends of the four reins dangling from the Sun's hand. The flames and rays are seen to continue to radiate from the platform of the chariot between and beyond these ends of the reins, and over the knee. He may have wanted to acknowledge that the warmth of the earth was Apollo's, by making these ends of the reins spread out separately and

---

\* “Would not the design have looked better, to us, on the plate than on the print? On the plate, the reins would be in the left hand; and the whole movement be from the left to the right? The two different forms that the radiance takes would symbolize respectively heat and light, would they not?”

wave, and thereby enclose a form like a flame. But I cannot think it.

"Believe me,

"Ever yours truly,

"CHAS. WM. SMITH."

II. I meant to keep labyrinthine matters for my Appendix ; but the following most useful byewords from Mr. Tyrerwhitt had better be read at once :—

"In the matter of Cretan Labyrinth, as connected by Virgil with the *Ludus Trojæ*, or equestrian game of winding and turning, continued in England from twelfth century ; and having for last relic the maze\* called 'Troy Town,' at Troy Farm, near Somerton, Oxfordshire, which itself resembles the circular labyrinth on a coin of Cnossus in *Fors Clavigera*.

"The connecting quotation from Virg., *Æn.*, v., 588, is as follows :

'*Ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta  
Parietibus textum cæcis iter, ancipitemque  
Mille viis habuisse dolum, quæ signa sequendi  
Falleret indepressus et inremeabilis error.  
Haud alio Teucrûn nati vestigia cursu  
Impediunt, texuntque fagas et prælia ludo,  
Delphinum similes.*'"

Labyrinth of Ariadne, as cut on the Downs by shepherds from time immemorial,—

Shakspeare, 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' Act ii., sc. 2 :

"*Oberon.* The nine-men's-morris† is filled up with mud ;  
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green  
By lack of tread are undistinguishable."

---

\* Strutt, pp. 97-8, ed. 1801.

† Explained as "a game still played by the shepherds, cowkeepers," etc., in the midland counties.

The following passage, 'Merchant of Venice,' Act iii., sc. 2, confuses (to all appearance) the Athenian tribute to Crete, with the story of Hesione: and may point to general confusion in the Elizabethan mind about the myths:

"*Portia.* . . . . with much more love  
Than young Alcides, when he did reduce  
The virgin-tribute paid by howling Troy  
To the sea monster."<sup>\*</sup>

Theseus is the Attic Hercules, however; and Troy may have been a sort of house of call for mythical monsters, in the view of midland shepherds.

\* See *Iliad*, 20, 145.

THE  
WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN.

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

VOLUME VII.

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.



GEORGE ALLEN,  
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1876.









ORE DE RE OSIGNORDESIGNORI  
 CHE NELLOETTERNO REGGI SENPRE SOLO  
 ECHE CHORREGGI TVTTI ENOSTRI ERRORI  
 STANDOASSEDEPE SVNELSVPERNO POLO  
 OMELODIA DEGLANCELICI CHORI  
 ASCHOLTA VNPOCHO ELNOSTROAMARO  
 EVIENI E REGGI NOI ORE ALTISSIMO  
 COLTVO AMORECHEETANTO DOLCISSE

"Obediente Domino voci hominis."

1817

1818

1819

1820



CHE DI VOI OGNUNO DEI SIGNORI  
 CHE NE LO STIMO REGGI SENPRE SOLO  
 E CHE OGNUNO DI TVTTI ENOSTRI ERRORI  
 STANDO A MIEDE SVNEL SVPERNO POLO  
 OMELONIA DE GLANCEMCI CHOR!  
 ASCHOLTA VNPOCHO EL NOSTRO AMARO  
 EVIEN E REGGI NOTORE ALTIS  
 COLTVO AMORE CHEE TANTO DE LIS

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

*WITH APPENDIX.*

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,  
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

GEORGE ALLEN,  
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.  
1876.

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## APPENDIX.

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### ARTICLE I.

#### NOTES ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND.

I HAVE long deferred the completion of this book, because I had hoped to find time to show, in some fulness, the grounds for my conviction that engraving, and the study of it, since the development of the modern finished school, have been ruinous to European knowledge of art. But I am more and more busied in what I believe to be better work, and can only with extreme brevity state here the conclusions of many years' thought.

These, in several important particulars, have been curiously enforced on me by the carelessness shown by the picture dealers about the copies from Turner which it has cost Mr. Ward and me \*

\* See note to the close of this article, p. 248.

fifteen years of study together to enable ourselves to make. "They are only copies," say they,— "nobody will look at them."

It never seems to occur even to the most intelligent persons that an engraving also is 'only a copy,' and a copy done with refusal of colour, and with disadvantage of means in rendering shade. But just because this utterly inferior copy can be reduplicated, and introduces a different kind of skill, in another material, people are content to lose all the composition, and all the charm, of the original,—so far as these depend on the chief gift of a *painter*,—colour; while they are gradually misled into attributing to the painter himself qualities impertinently added by the engraver to make his plate popular: and, which is far worse, they are as gradually and subtly prevented from looking, in the original, for the qualities which engraving could never render. Further, it continually happens that the very best colour-compositions engrave worst; for they often extend colours over great spaces at equal pitch, and the green is as dark as the red, and the blue as the brown; so that the engraver can only distinguish them by lines in different directions, and his plate becomes a vague and dead mass of neutral tint; but a bad and forced piece of colour, or a piece of work of the

Bolognese school, which is everywhere black in the shadows, and colourless in the lights, will engrave with great ease, and appear spirited and forcible. Hence engravers, as a rule, are interested in reproducing the work of the worst schools of painting.

Also, the idea that the merit of an engraving consisted in light and shade, has prevented the modern masters from even attempting to render works dependent mainly on outline and expression; like the early frescoes, which should indeed have been the objects of their most attentive and continual skill: for outline and expression are entirely within the scope of engraving; and the scripture histories of an aisle of a cloister might have been engraved, to perfection, with little more pains than are given by ordinary workmen to round a limb by Correggio, or imitate the texture of a dress by Sir Joshua,—and both, at last, inadequately.

I will not lose more time in asserting or lamenting the mischief arising out of the existing system: but will rapidly state what the public should now ask for.

1. Exquisitely careful engraved outlines of all remaining frescoes of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in Italy, with so much pale tinting as may be explanatory of their main masses; and with the local darks and local lights brilliantly

relieved. The Arundel Society have published some meritorious plates of this kind from Angelico,—not, however, paying respect enough to the local colours, but conventionalizing the whole too much into outline.

2. Finished small plates for book illustration. The cheap woodcutting and etching of popular illustrated books have been endlessly mischievous to public taste: they first obtained their power in a general reaction of the public mind from the insipidity of the lower school of line engraving, brought on it by servile persistence in hack work for ignorant publishers. The last dregs of it may still be seen in the sentimental landscapes engraved for cheap ladies' pocket-books. But the woodcut can never, educationally, take the place of serene and accomplished line engraving; and the training of young artists in whom the gift of delineation prevails over their sense of colour, to the production of scholarly, but small plates, with their utmost honour of skill, would give a hitherto unconceived dignity to the character and range of our popular literature.

3. Vigorous mezzotints from pictures of the great masters, which originally present noble contrasts of light and shade. Many Venetian works are magnificent in this character.

4. Original design by painters themselves, decisively engraved in few lines—(*not* etched); and with such insistence by dotted work on the main contours as we have seen in the examples given from Italian engraving.

5. On the other hand, the men whose quiet patience and exquisite manual dexterity are at present employed in producing large and costly plates, such as that of the *Belle Jardinière* de Florence, by M. Boucher Desnoyers, should be entirely released from their servile toil, and employed exclusively in producing coloured copies, or light drawings, from the original work. The same number of hours of labour, applied with the like conscientious skill, would multiply precious likenesses of the real picture, full of subtle veracities which no steel line could approach, and conveying, to thousands, true knowledge and unaffected enjoyment of painting; while the finished plate lies uncared for in the portfolio of the virtuoso, serving only, so far as it is seen in the printseller's window by the people, to make them think that sacred painting must always be dull, and unnatural.

I have named the above engraving, because, for persons wishing to study the present qualities and methods of line-work, it is a pleasant and sufficient

possession, uniting every variety of texture with great serenity of unforced effect, and exhibiting every possible artifice and achievement in the distribution of even and rugged, or of close and open line; artifices for which,—while I must yet once more and emphatically repeat that they are illegitimate, and could not be practised in a revived school of classic art,—I would fain secure the reader's reverent admiration, under the conditions exacted by the school to which they belong. Let him endeavour, with the finest point of pen or pencil he can obtain, to imitate the profile of this Madonna in its relief against the grey background of the water surface; let him examine, through a good lens, the way in which the lines of the background are ended in a lance-point as they approach it; the exact equality of depth of shade being restored by inserted dots, which prepare for the transition to the manner of shade adopted in the flesh: then let him endeavour to trace with his own hand some of the curved lines at the edge of the eyelid, or in the rounding of the lip; or if these be too impossible, even a few of the quiet undulations which gradate the folds of the hood behind the hair; and he will, I trust, begin to comprehend the range of delightful work which would be within the reach of such an artist,

employed with more tractable material on more extended subject.

If, indeed, the present system were capable of influencing the mass of the people, and enforcing among them the subtle attention necessary to appreciate it, something might be pleaded in defence of its severity. But all these plates are entirely above the means of the lower middle classes, and perhaps not one reader in a hundred can possess himself, for the study I ask of him, even of the plate to which I have just referred. What, in the stead of such, he can and does possess, let him consider,—and, if possible, just after examining the noble qualities of this conscientious engraving.

Take up, for an average specimen of modern illustrated works, the volume of Dickens's 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' containing 'Barnaby Rudge.'

You have in that book an entirely profitless and monstrous story, in which the principal characters are a coxcomb, an idiot, a madman, a savage blackguard, a foolish tavern-keeper, a mean old maid, and a conceited apprentice,—mixed up with a certain quantity of ordinary operative pastoral stuff, about a pretty Dolly in ribands, a lover with a wooden leg, and an heroic locksmith. For these latter, the only elements of good, or

life, in the filthy mass of the story,\* observe that the author must filch the wreck of those old times of which we fiercely and frantically destroy every living vestige, whenever it is possible. You cannot have your Dolly Varden brought up behind the counter of a railway station; nor your jolly locksmith trained at a Birmingham brass-foundry. And of these materials, observe that you can only have the ugly ones illustrated. The cheap popular art cannot draw for you beauty, sense, or honesty; and for Dolly Varden, or the locksmith, you will look through the vignettes in vain. But every species of distorted folly and vice,—the idiot, the blackguard, the coxcomb, the paltry fool, the degraded woman,—are pictured for your honourable pleasure in every page, with clumsy caricature, struggling to render its dulness tolerable by insisting on defect,—if perchance a penny or two more may be coined out of the Cockney reader's itch for loathsomeness.

Or take up, for instance of higher effort, the 'Cornhill Magazine' for this month, July, 1876. It has a vignette of Venice for an illuminated letter. That is what your decorative art has

\* The raven, however, like all Dickens's animals, is perfect: and I am the more angry with the rest because I have every now and then to open the book to look for him.



become, by help of Kensington ! The letter to be produced is a T. There is a gondola in the front of the design, with the canopy slipped back to the stern like a saddle over a horse's tail. There is another in the middle distance, all gone to seed at the prow, with its gondolier emaciated into an oar, at the stern ; then there is a Church of the Salute, and a Ducal palace,—in which I beg you to observe all the felicity and dexterity of modern cheap engraving ; finally, over the Ducal palace there is something, I know not in the least what meant for, like an umbrella dropping out of a balloon, which is the ornamental letter T. Opposite this ornamental design, there is an engraving of two young ladies and a parasol, between two trunks of trees. The white face and black feet of the principal young lady, being the points of the design, are done with as much care,—not with as much dexterity,—as an ordinary sketch of Dumourier's in Punch. The young lady's dress, the next attraction, is done in cheap white and black cutting, with considerably less skill than that of any ordinary tailor's or milliner's shop-book pattern drawing. For the other young lady, and the landscape, take your magnifying glass, and look at the hacked wood that forms the entire shaded surface—one mass of idiotic scrabble, without the remotest

attempt to express a single leaf, flower, or clod of earth. It is such landscape as the public sees out of its railroad window at sixty miles of it in the hour—and good enough for such a public.

Then turn to the last—the poetical plate, p. 122: “Lifts her—lays her down with care.” Look at the gentleman with a spade, promoting the advance, over a hillock of hay, of the reposing figure in the black-sided tub. Take your magnifying glass to *that*, and look what a dainty female arm and hand your modern scientific and anatomical schools of art have provided you with! Look at the tender horizontal flux of the sea round the promontory point above. Look at the tender engraving of the linear light on the divine horizon, above the ravenous seagull. Here is Development and Progress for you, from the days of Perugino’s horizon, and Dante’s daybreaks! Truly, here it seems

“Si che le bianche e le vermiglie guance  
Per troppa etate divenivan rance.”

I have chosen no gross or mean instances of modern work. It is one of the saddest points connected with the matter that the designer of this last plate is a person of consummate art faculty, but bound to the wheel of the modern

Juggernaut, and broken on it. These woodcuts, for 'Barnaby Rudge' and the 'Cornhill Magazine,' are favourably representative of the entire illustrative art industry of the modern press,—industry enslaved to the ghastly service of catching the last gleams in the glued eyes of the daily more bestial English mob,—railroad born and bred, which drags itself about the black world it has withered under its breath, in one eternal grind and shriek,—gobbling,—staring,—chattering,—giggling,—trampling out every vestige of national honour and domestic peace, wherever it sets the staggering hoof of it; incapable of reading, of hearing, of thinking, of looking,—capable only of greed for money, lust for food, pride of dress, and the prurient itch of momentary curiosity for the politics last announced by the newsmonger, and the religion last rolled by the chemist into electuary for the dead.

In the miserably competitive labour of finding new stimulus for the appetite—daily more gross—of this tyrannous mob, we may count as lost, beyond any hope, the artists who are dull, docile, or distressed enough to submit to its demands; and we may count the dull and the distressed by myriads;—and among the docile, many of the best intellects we possess. The few who have sense and strength to assert their own place and supremacy, are driven

into discouraged disease by their isolation, like Turner and Blake ; the one abandoning the design of his 'Liber Studiorum' after imperfectly and sadly, against total public neglect, carrying it forward to what it is,—monumental, nevertheless, in landscape engraving ; the other producing, with one only majestic series of designs from the book of Job, nothing for his life's work but coarsely iridescent sketches of enigmatic dream.

And, for total result of our English engraving industry during the last hundred and fifty years, I find that practically at this moment I cannot get a *single* piece of true, sweet, and comprehensible art, to place for instruction in any children's school ! I can get, for ten pounds apiece, well-engraved portraits of Sir Joshua's beauties showing graceful limbs through flowery draperies ; I can get—dirt-cheap—any quantity of Dutch flats, ditches, and hedges, enlivened by cows chewing the cud, and dogs behaving indecently ; I can get heaps upon heaps of temples, and forums, and altars, arranged as for academical competition, round seaports, with curled-up ships that only touch the water with the middle of their bottoms. I can get, at the price of lumber, any quantity of British squires flourishing whips and falling over hurdles ; and, in suburban shops, a dolorous variety of widowed mothers

nursing babies in a high light, with the Bible on a table, and baby's shoes on a chair. Also, of cheap prints, painted red and blue, of Christ blessing little children, of Joseph and his brethren, the infant Samuel, or Daniel in the lion's den, the supply is ample enough to make every child in these islands think of the Bible as a somewhat dull story-book, allowed on Sunday ;—but of trained, wise, and worthy art, applied to gentle purposes of instruction, no single example can be found in the shops of the British printseller or bookseller. And after every dilettante tongue in European society has filled drawing-room and academy alike with idle clatter concerning the divinity of Raphael and Michael Angelo, for these last hundred years, I cannot at this instant, for the first school which I have some power of organizing under St. George's laws, get a good print of Raphael's Madonna of the tribune, or an ordinarily intelligible view of the side and dome of St. Peter's!

And there are simply no words for the mixed absurdity and wickedness of the present popular demand for art, as shown by its supply in our thoroughfares. Abroad, in the shops of the Rue de Rivoli, brightest and most central of Parisian streets, the putrescent remnant of what was once Catholicism promotes its poor gilded pedlars' ware

of nativity and crucifixion into such honourable corners as it can find among the more costly and studious illuminations of the brothel: and although, in Pall Mall, and the Strand, the large-margined Landseer,—Stanfield,—or Turner-proofs, in a few stately windows, still represent, uncared-for by the people, or inaccessible to them, the power of an English school now wholly perished,—these are too surely superseded, in the windows that stop the crowd, by the thrilling attraction with which Doré, Gérôme, and Tadema have invested the gambling table, the duelling ground, and the arena; or by the more material and almost tangible truth with which the apothecary-artist stereographs the stripped actress, and the railway mound.

Under these conditions, as I have now repeatedly asserted, no professorship, nor school, of art can be of the least use to the general public. No race can understand a visionary landscape, which blasts its real mountains into ruin, and blackens its river-beds with foam of poison. Nor is it of the least use to exhibit ideal Diana at Kensington, while substantial Phryne may be worshipped in the Strand. The only recovery of our art-power possible,—nay, when once we know the full meaning of it, the only one desirable,—must result from the purification of the nation's heart, and chastisement of its life: utterly

hopeless now, for our adult population, or in our large cities, and their neighbourhood. But, so far as any of the sacred influence of former design can be brought to bear on the minds of the young, and so far as, in rural districts, the first elements of scholarly education can be made pure, the foundation of a new dynasty of thought may be slowly laid. I was strangely impressed by the effect produced in a provincial seaport school for children, chiefly of fishermen's families, by the gift of a little coloured drawing of a single figure from the *Paradise* of Angelico in the *Accademia* of Florence. The drawing was wretched enough, seen beside the original; I had only bought it from the poor Italian copyist for charity: but, to the children, it was like an actual glimpse of heaven; they rejoiced in it with pure joy, and their mistress thanked me for it more than if I had sent her a whole library of good books. Of such copies, the grace-giving industry of young girls, now worse than lost in the spurious charities of the bazaar, or selfish ornamentations of the drawing-room, might, in a year's time, provide enough for every dame-school in England; and a year's honest work of the engravers employed on our base novels, might represent to our advanced students every frescoed legend of philosophy and morality extant in Christendom.

For my own part, I have no purpose, in what remains to me of opportunity, either at Oxford or elsewhere, to address any farther course of instruction towards the development of existing schools. After seeing the stream of the Teviot as black as ink, and a putrid carcase of a sheep lying in the dry channel of the Jed, under Jedburgh Abbey, (the entire strength of the summer stream being taken away to supply a single mill,) I know, finally, what value the British mind sets on the 'beauties of nature,' and shall attempt no farther the excitement of its enthusiasm in that direction. I shall indeed endeavour to carry out, with Mr. Ward's help, my twenty years' held purpose of making the real character of Turner's work known, to the persons who, formerly interested by the engravings from him, imagined half the merit was of the engraver's giving. But I know perfectly that to the general people, trained in the midst of the ugliest objects that vice can design, in houses, mills, and machinery, *all* beautiful form and colour is as invisible as the seventh heaven. It is not a question of appreciation at all; the thing is physically invisible to them, as human speech is inaudible during a steam whistle.

And I shall also use all the strength I have to convince those, among our artists of the second order, who are wise and modest enough not to think



themselves the matches of Turner or Michael Angelo, that in the present state of art they only waste their powers in endeavouring to produce original pictures of human form or passion. Modern aristocratic life is too vulgar, and modern peasant life too unhappy, to furnish subjects of noble study; while, even were it otherwise, the multiplication of designs by painters of second-rate power is no more desirable than the writing of music by inferior composers. They may, with far greater personal happiness, and incalculably greater advantage to others, devote themselves to the affectionate and sensitive copying of the works of men of just renown. The dignity of this self-sacrifice would soon be acknowledged with sincere respect; for copies produced by men working with such motive would differ no less from the common trade-article of the galleries than the rendering of music by an enthusiastic and highly trained executant differs from the grinding of a street organ. And the change in the tone of public feeling, produced by familiarity with such work, would soon be no less great than in their musical enjoyment, if having been accustomed only to hear black Christys, blind fiddlers, and hoarse beggars scrape or howl about their streets, they were permitted daily audience of faithful and gentle orchestral rendering of the work of the highest classical masters.

I have not, until very lately, rightly appreciated the results of the labour of the Arundel Society in this direction. Although, from the beginning, I have been honoured in being a member of its council, my action has been hitherto rather of check than help, because I thought more of the differences between our copies and the great originals, than of their unquestionable superiority to anything the public could otherwise obtain.

I was practically convinced of their extreme value only this last winter, by staying at the house of a friend in which the Arundel engravings were the principal decoration; and where I learned more of Masaccio from the Arundel copy of the contest with Simon Magus, than in the Brancacci chapel itself; for the daily companionship with the engraving taught me subtleties in its composition which had escaped me in the multitudinous interest of visits to the actual fresco.

But the work of the Society has been sorely hindered hitherto, because it has had at command only the skill of copyists trained in foreign schools of colour, and accustomed to meet no more accurate requisitions than those of the fashionable traveller. I have always hoped for, and trust at last to obtain, co-operation with our too mildly laborious copyists, of English artists possessing more brilliant

colour faculty ; and the permission of our subscribers to secure for them the great ruins of the noble past, undesecrated by the trim, but treacherous, plastering of modern emendation.

Finally, I hope to direct some of the antiquarian energy often to be found remaining, even when love of the picturesque has passed away, to encourage the accurate delineation and engraving of historical monuments, as a direct function of our schools of art. All that I have generally to suggest on this matter has been already stated with sufficient clearness in the first of my inaugural lectures at Oxford : and my forthcoming 'Elements of Drawing' will contain all the directions I can give in writing as to methods of work for such purpose. The publication of these has been hindered, for at least a year, by the abuses introduced by the modern cheap modes of printing engravings. I find the men won't use any ink but what pleases them, nor print but with what pressure pleases them ; and if I can get the foreman to attend to the business, and choose the ink right, the men change it the moment he leaves the room, and threaten to throw up the job when they are detected. All this, I have long known well, is a matter of course, in the outcome of modern principles of trade ; but it has rendered it hitherto impossible for me to

produce illustrations, which have been ready, as far as my work or that of my own assistants is concerned, for a year and a half. Any one interested in hearing of our progress—or arrest, may write to my Turner copyist, Mr. Ward: \* and, in the meantime, they can help my designs for art education best by making these Turner copies more generally known; and by determining, when they travel, to spend what sums they have at their disposal, not in fady photography, but in the encouragement of any good *water-colour* and *pencil* draughtsmen whom they find employed in the *galleries* of Europe.

\* 2, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey. NOTE.—I have hitherto permitted Mr. Ward to copy any Turner drawing he was asked to do; but, finding there is a run upon the vignettes of Loch Lomond and Derwent, I have forbidden him to do more of them for the present, lest his work should get the least mechanical. The admirable drawings of Venice, by my good assistant Mr. Bunney, resident there, will become of more value to their purchasers every year, as the buildings from which they are made are destroyed. I was but just in time, working with him at Verona, to catch record of Fra Giocondo's work in the smaller square; the most beautiful Renaissance design in North Italy.

## ARTICLE II.

## DETACHED NOTES.

## I.

*On the series of Sibyl engravings attributed to Botticelli.*

SINCE I wrote the earlier lectures in this volume, I have been made more doubtful on several points which were embarrassing enough before, by seeing some better, (so-called,) impressions of my favourite plates, containing light and shade which did not improve them.

I do not choose to waste time or space in discussion, till I know more of the matter; and that more I must leave to my good friend Mr. Reid of the British Museum to find out for me; for I have no time to take up the subject myself, but I give, for frontispiece to this Appendix, the engraving of Joshua referred to in the text, which however beautiful in thought, is an example of the inferior execution and more elaborate shade which puzzle me. But whatever is said in the previous pages of the plates chosen for example, by whomsoever

done, is absolutely trustworthy. Thoroughly fine they are, in their existing state, and exemplary to all persons and times. And of the rest, in fitting place I hope to give complete—or at least satisfactory account.

## II.

*On the three excellent engravers representative of the first, middle, and late schools.*

I have given opposite a photograph, slightly reduced from the Durer Madonna, alluded to often in the text, as an example of his best conception of womanhood. It is very curious that Durer, the least able of all great artists to represent womanhood, should of late have been a very principal object of feminine admiration. The last thing a woman should do is to write about art. They never see anything in pictures but what they are told, (or resolve to see out of contradiction,)—or the particular things that fall in with their own feelings. I saw a curious piece of enthusiastic writing by an Edinburgh lady, the other day, on the photographs I had taken from the tower of Giotto. She did not care a straw what Giotto had meant by them, declared she felt it her duty only to announce what they were to *her*; and wrote two pages on



to be a fairly accurate estimate for the average rate, and even only for a few times. And of the rest, according to the  $\beta$  to give a negative or at least satisfactory.

## ii.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathcal{L}_1 &= \frac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \left( \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial t} + \nabla \phi \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} + \nabla \psi \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \chi}{\partial t} + \nabla \chi \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \eta}{\partial t} + \nabla \eta \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 \right. \\
 &\quad \left. + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial t} + \nabla \theta \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \zeta}{\partial t} + \nabla \zeta \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \xi}{\partial t} + \nabla \xi \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial \eta}{\partial t} + \nabla \eta \cdot \mathbf{v} \right)^2 \right) dt.
 \end{aligned}$$

It shows that even a photograph, which by itself is the Dürer Madonna alluded to often, is not an example of his best conception of womanhood. It is very curious that Dürer, the least one of all great artists to represent womanhood truthfully, should have made this principal work of his so untrue to the last thing a great artist should do about art. They are not artists, but what they are, they are, and they are contradictory, or the more so, that they act in with their own feelings.

I saw a curious piece of enthusiastic writing by an English lady, the other day, on the photographs I had taken from the tower of Giotto. She did not care a straw what Giotto had meant by them, declared she felt it her duty only to announce what they were to *her*; and wrote two pages on





The Coronation in the Garden.



the bas-relief of Heracles and Antæus—assuming it to be the death of Abel.

It is not, however, by women only that Durer has been over-praised. He stands so alone in his own field, that the people who care much for him generally lose the power of enjoying anything else rightly ; and are continually attributing to the force of his imagination quaintnesses which are merely part of the general mannerism of his day.

The following notes upon him, in relation to two other excellent engravers, were written shortly for extempore expansion in lecturing. I give them, with the others in this terminal article, mainly for use to myself in future reference ; but also as more or less suggestive to the reader, if he has taken up the subject seriously, and worth, therefore, a few pages of this closing sheet.

The men I have named as representative of all the good ones composing their school, are alike resolved their engraving shall be lovely.

But Botticelli, the ancient, wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible.

Durer, the central, wants, with as much engraving as possible, anything of Sibyl that may chance to be picked up with it.

Beaugrand, the modern, wants, as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving too.

I repeat—for I want to get this clear to you—Botticelli wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible. For his head is full of Sibyls, and his heart. He can't draw them fast enough : one comes, and another and another ; and all, gracious and wonderful and good, to be engraved for ever, if only he had a thousand hands and lives. He scratches down one, with no haste, with no fault, divinely careful, scrupulous, patient, but with as few lines as possible. 'Another Sibyl—let me draw another, for heaven's sake, before she has burnt all her books, and vanished.'

Durer is exactly Botticelli's opposite. He is a workman, to the heart, and will do his work magnificently. 'No matter what I do it on, so that my craft be honourably shown. Anything will do ; a Sibyl, a skull, a Madonna and Christ, a hat and feather, an Adam, an Eve, a cock, a sparrow, a lion with two tails, a pig with five legs, —anything will do for me. But see if I don't show you what engraving is, be my subject what it may'!

Thirdly : Beaugrand, I said, wants as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving. He is essentially a copyist, and has no ideas of his own, but deep reverence and love for the work of others. He will give his life to represent another man's

thought. He will do his best with every spot and line,—exhibit to you, if you will only look, the most exquisite completion of obedient skill; but will be content, if you will not look, to pass his neglected years in fruitful peace, and count every day well spent that has given softness to a shadow, or light to a smile.

## III.

*On Durer's landscape, with reference to the sentence in p. 159:*

“I hope you are pleased.”

I spoke just now only of the ill-shaped body of this figure of Fortune, or Pleasure. Beneath her feet is an elaborate landscape. It is all drawn out of Durer's head;—he would look at bones or tendons carefully, or at the leaf details of foreground;—but at the breadth and loveliness of real landscape, never.

He has tried to give you a bird's-eye view of Germany; rocks, and woods, and clouds, and brooks, and the pebbles in their beds, and mills, and cottages, and fences, and what not; but it is all a feverish dream, ghastly and strange, a monotone of diseased imagination.

And here is a little bit of the world he would not look at—of the great river of his land, with

a single cluster of its reeds, and two boats, and an island with a village, and the way for the eternal waters opened between the rounded hills.\*

It is just what you may see any day, anywhere,—innocent, seemingly artless; but the artlessness of Turner is like the face of Gainsborough's village girl, and a joy for ever.

#### IV.

##### *On the study of anatomy.*

The virtual beginner of artistic anatomy in Italy was a man called 'The Poulterer'—from his grandfather's trade; 'Pollajuolo,' a man of immense power, but on whom the curse of the Italian mind in this age† was set at its deepest.

Any form of passionate excess has terrific effects on body and soul, in nations as in men; and when this excess is in rage, and rage against your brother, and rage accomplished in habitual deeds of blood,—do you think Nature will forget to set the seal of her indignation upon the forehead? I told

\* The engraving of Turner's "Scene on the Rhine" (near Bingen?) with boats on the right, and reedy foreground on left; the opening between its mountain banks in central distance. It is exquisitely engraved, the plate being of the size of the drawing, about ten inches by six, and finished with extreme care and feeling.

† See the horrible picture of St. Sebastian by him in our own National Gallery.

you that the great division of spirit between the northern and southern races had been reconciled in the Val d'Arno. The Font of Florence, and the Font of Pisa, were as the very springs of the life of the Christianity which had gone forth to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Prince of Peace. Yet these two brother cities were to each other—I do not say as Abel and Cain, but as Eteocles and Polynices, and the words of Æschylus are now fulfilled in them to the uttermost. The Arno baptizes their dead bodies :—their native valley between its mountains is to them as the furrow of a grave ;—“and so much of their land they have, as is sepulchre.” Nay, not of Florence and Pisa only was this true : Venice and Genoa died in death-grapple ; and eight cities of Lombardy divided between them the joy of levelling Milan to her lowest stone. Nay, not merely in city against city, but in street against street, and house against house, the fury of the Theban dragon flamed ceaselessly, and with the same excuse upon men's lips. The sign of the shield of Polynices, Justice bringing back the exile, was to them all, in turn, the portent of death : and their history, in the sum of it and substance, is as of the servants of Joab and Abner by the pool of Gibeon. “They caught

every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called 'the field of the strong men'."

Now it is not possible for Christian men to live thus, except under a fever of insanity. I have before, in my lectures on Prudence and Insolence in art, deliberately asserted to you the logical accuracy of the term 'demoniacal possession'—the being in the power or possession of a betraying spirit; and the definite sign of such insanity is delight in witnessing pain, usually accompanied by an instinct that gloats over or plays with physical uncleanness or disease, and always by a morbid egotism. It is not to be recognized for demoniacal power so much by its *viciousness*, as its *paltriness*,—the taking pleasure in minute, contemptible, and loathsome things.\* Now, in the middle of the gallery of the Brera at Milan, there is an elaborate study of a dead Christ, entirely characteristic of early fifteenth century Italian madman's work. It is called—and was presented to the people as—a Christ; but it *is* only an anatomical study of a vulgar and ghastly dead body, with the soles of the feet set straight at the spectator, and the rest

\* As in the muscles of the legs and effort in stretching bows, of the executioners, in the picture just referred to.



foreshortened. It is either Castagno's or Mantegna's,—in my mind, set down to Castagno; but I have not looked at the picture for years, and am not sure at this moment. It does not matter a straw which: it is exactly characteristic of the madness in which all of them—Pollajuolo, Castagno, Mantegna, Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, polluted their work with the science of the sepulchre,\* and degraded it with presumptuous and paltry technical skill. Foreshorten your Christ, and

\* Observe, I entirely distinguish the study of *anatomy*—i.e., of intense bone and muscle—from study of the *nude*, as the Greeks practised it. This for an entirely great painter is absolutely necessary; but yet I believe, in the case of Botticelli, it was nobly restricted. The following note by Mr. Tyrwhitt contains, I think, the probable truth:—

“The facts relating to Sandro Botticelli's models, or rather to his favourite model (as it appears to me), are but few; and it is greatly to be regretted that his pictures are seldom dated;—if it were certain in what order they appeared, what follows here might approach moral certainty.

“There is no doubt that he had great personal regard for Fra Filippo, up to that painter's death in 1469, Sandro being then twenty-two years old. He may probably have got only good from him; anyhow he would get a strong turn for Realism,—i.e., the treatment of sacred and all other subjects in a realistic manner. He is described in Crowe and Cavalcaselle from Filippino Lippi's *Martyrdom of St. Peter*, as a sullen and sensual man, with beetle brows, large fleshy mouth, etc., etc. Probably he was a strong man, and intense in physical and intellectual habit.

“This man, then, begins to paint in his strength, with conviction—rather happy and innocent than not—that it is right to paint any beautiful thing, and best to paint the most beautiful,—say in 1470, at twenty-three years of age. The allegorical Spring and the Graces,

paint him, if you can, half putrified,—that is the scientific art of the Renaissance.

It is impossible, however, in so vast a subject to distinguish always the beginner of things from

and the Aphrodite now in the Ufficii, were painted for Cosmo, and seem to be taken by Vasari and others as early, or early-central, works in his life: also the portrait of Simonetta Vespucci.<sup>1</sup> He is known to have painted much in early life for the Vespucci and the Medici;—and this daughter of the former house seems to have been innamorata or mistress of Giuliano de' Medici, murdered by the Pazzi in 1478. Now it seems agreed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater, etc., (and I am quite sure of it myself as to the pictures mentioned)—first, that the same slender and long-throated model appears in Spring, the Aphrodite, Calumny, and other works.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, that she was Simonetta, the original of the Pitti portrait.

“Now I think she must have been induced to let Sandro draw from her whole person undraped, more or less; and that he must have done so as such a man probably would, in strict honour as to deed, word, and *definite* thought, but under occasional accesses of passion of which he said nothing, and which in all probability and by grace of God refined down to nil, or nearly so, as he got accustomed to look in honour at so beautiful a thing. (He may have left off the undraped after her death.) First, her figure is absolutely fine Gothic; I don't think any antique is so slender. Secondly, she has the sad, passionate, and exquisite Lombard mouth. Thirdly, her limbs shrink together, and she seems not quite to have ‘liked it,’ or been an accustomed model. Fourthly, there is tradition, giving her name to all those forms.

“Her lover Giuliano was murdered in 1478, and Savonarola hanged and burnt in 1498. Now, can her distress, and Savonarola's preaching, between them, have taken, in few years, all the carnality out of Sandro, supposing him to have come already, by seventy-eight, to that state in which the sight of her delighted him, without provoking

<sup>1</sup> Pitti, Stanza di Prometeo, 348.

<sup>2</sup> I think Zipporah may be a remembrance of her.

the establisher. To the poulterer's son, Pollajuolo, remains the eternal shame of first making insane contest the only subject of art; but the two *establishers* of anatomy were Lionardo and Michael

ulterior feelings? All decent men accustomed to draw from the nude tell us they get to that.

"Sandro's Dante is dated as published in 1482. He may have been saddening by that time, and weary of beauty, pure or mixed;—though he went on painting Madonnas, I fancy. (Can Simonetta be traced in any of them? I think not. The Sistine paintings extend from 1481 to 1484, however. I cannot help thinking Zipporah is impressed with her.) After Savonarola's death, Sandro must have lost heart, and gone into Dante altogether. Most ways in literature and art lead to Dante; and this question about the nude and the purity of Botticelli is no exception to the rule.

"Now in the Purgatorio, Lust is the last sin of which we are to be made pure, and it has to be burnt out of us: being itself as searching as fire, as smouldering, devouring, and all that. Corruptio optimi pessima: and it is the most searching and lasting of evils, because it really is a corruption attendant on true Love, which is eternal—whatever the word means. That this is so, seems to me to demonstrate the truth of the Fall of Man from the condition of moral very-goodness in God's sight. And I think that Dante connected the purifying pains of his intermediate state with actual sufferings in this life, working out repentance,—in himself and others. And the 'torment' of this passion, to the repentant or resisting, or purity-seeking soul is decidedly like the pain of physical burning.

"Further, its casuistry is impracticable; because the more you stir the said 'fire,' the stronger hold it takes. Therefore men and women are *rightly* secret about it, and detailed confessions inadvisable. Much talk about 'hypocrisy' in this matter is quite wrong and unjust. Then, its connexion with female beauty, as a cause of love between man and woman, seems to me to be the inextricable nodus of the Fall, the here inseparable mixture of good and evil, till soul and body are parted. For the sense of seen Beauty is the awakening

Angelo. You hear of Lionardo chiefly because of his Last Supper, but Italy did not hear of him for that. This was not what brought *her* to worship Lionardo—but the Battle of the Standard.

## V.

*Fragments on Holbein and others.*

Of Holbein's St. Elizabeth, remember, she is not a perfect Saint Elizabeth, by any means. She is an honest and sweet German lady,—the best he could see; he could do no better;—and so I come back to my old story,—no man can do better than he sees: if he can reach the nature round him, it is well; he may fall short of it; he cannot rise above it; “the best, in this kind, are but shadows.”

\*       \*       \*       \*

Yet that intense veracity of Holbein is indeed the strength and glory of all the northern

of Love, at whatever distance from any kind of return or sympathy—as with a rose, or what not. Sandro may be the man who has gone nearest to the right separation of Delight from Desire: supposing that he began with religion and a straight conscience; saw lovingly the error of Fra Filippo's way; saw with intense distant love the error of Simonetta's; and reflected on Florence and *its* way, and drew nearer and nearer to Savonarola, being yet too big a man for asceticism; and finally wearied of all things, and sunk into poverty and peace.”

schools. They exist only in being true. Their work among men is the definition of what *is*, and the abiding by it. They cannot dream of what is not. They make fools of themselves if they try. Think how feeble even Shakspeare is when he tries his hand at a Goddess;—women, beautiful and womanly,—as many as you choose; but who cares what his Minerva or Juno, say in the masque of the Tempest? And for the painters—when Sir Joshua tries for a Madonna, or Vandyke for a Diana—they can't even *paint*! they become total simpletons. Look at Rubens' mythologies in the Louvre, or at modern French heroics, or German pietisms! Why, all—Cornelius, Hesse, Overbeck, and David—put together, are not worth one De Hooghe of an old woman with a broom sweeping a back-kitchen. The one thing we northerns can do is to find out what is fact, and insist on it: mean fact it may be, or noble,—but fact always, or we die.

Yet the intensest form of northern realization can be matched in the south, when the southerners choose. There are two pieces of animal drawing in the Sistine Chapel unrivalled for literal veracity. The sheep at the well in front of Zipporah; and afterwards, when she is going away, leading her children, her eldest boy, like every one else, has

taken his chief treasure with him, and this treasure is his pet dog. It is a little sharp-nosed white fox-terrier, full of fire and life; but not strong enough for a long walk. So little Gershom, whose name was "the stranger" because his father had been a stranger in a strange land,—little Gershom carries his white terrier under his arm, lying on the top of a large bundle to make it comfortable. The doggie puts its sharp nose and bright eyes out, above his hand, with a little roguish glcam sideways in them, which means,—if I can read rightly a dog's expression,—that he has been barking at Moses all the morning, and has nearly put him out of temper:—and without any doubt, I can assert to you that there is not any other such piece of animal painting in the world,—so brief, intense, vivid, and absolutely balanced in truth: as tenderly drawn as if it had been a saint, yet as humorously as Landseer's Lord Chancellor poodle.

Oppose to Holbein's Veracity—Botticelli's Fantasy.

"	"	Shade	"	Colour.
"	"	Despair	"	Faith.
"	"	Grossness	"	Purity.

True Fantasy. Botticelli's Tree in Hellespontic Sybil. Not a real tree at all—yet founded on

intensest perception of beautiful reality. So the swan of Clio, as opposed to Durer's cock, or to Turner's swan.

The Italian power of abstraction into one mythologic personage—Holbein's death is only literal. He has to split his death into thirty different deaths; and each is but a skeleton. But Orcagna's death is one—the power of death itself. There may thus be as much *breadth in thought*, as in execution.

\* \* \* \*

What then, we have to ask, is a man *conscious of* in what he sees?

For instance, in all Cruikshank's etchings—however slight the outline—there is an intense consciousness of light and shade, and of local colour, *as a part* of light and shade; but none of colour itself. He was wholly incapable of colouring; and perhaps this very deficiency enabled him to give graphic harmony to engraving.

\* \* \* \*

Bewick—snow-pieces, etc. *Grey* predominant; *perfect sense of colour*, coming out in patterns of birds;—yet so uncultivated, that he engraves the brown birds better than pheasant or peacock!

For quite perfect consciousness of colour makes

engraving impossible, and you have instead—Correggio.

## VI.

### *Final notes on light and shade.*

You will find in the 138th and 147th paragraphs of my inaugural lectures, statements which, if you were reading the book by yourselves, would strike you probably as each of them difficult, and in some degree inconsistent,—namely, that the school of colour has exquisite character and sentiment; but is childish, cheerful, and fantastic; while the school of shade is deficient in character and sentiment; but supreme in intellect and veracity. "The way by light and shade," I say, "is taken by men of the highest powers of thought and most earnest desire for truth."

The school of shade, I say, is deficient in character and sentiment. Compare any of Durer's Madonnas with any of Angelico's.

Yet you may discern in the Apocalypse engravings that Durer's mind was seeking for truths, and dealing with questions, which no more could have occurred to Angelico's mind than to that of a two-years'-old baby.

The two schools unite in various degrees; but are always distinguishably generic, the two head-



most masters representing each being Tintoret and Perugino. The one, deficient in sentiment, and continually offending us by the want of it, but full of intellectual power and suggestion.

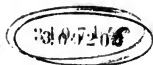
The other, repeating ideas with so little reflection that he gets blamed for doing the same thing over again, (Vasari); but exquisite in sentiment and the conditions of taste which it forms, so as to become the master of it to Raphael and to all succeeding him; and remaining such a type of sentiment, too delicate to be felt by the latter practical mind of Dutch-bred England, that Goldsmith makes the admiration of him the test of absurd connoisseurship. But yet, with under-current of intellect, which gets him accused of free-thinking, and therefore with under-current of entirely exquisite *chiaroscuro*.

Light and shade, then, imply the understanding of things—Colour, the imagination and the sentiment of them.

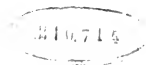
In Turner's distinctive work, colour is scarcely acknowledged unless under influence of sunshine. The sunshine is his treasure; his lividest gloom contains it; his greyest twilight regrets it, and remembers. Blue is always a blue shadow; brown or gold, always light;—nothing is cheerful but sunshine; wherever the sun is not, there is melan-

choly or evil. Apollo is God; and all forms of death and sorrow exist in opposition to him.

But in Perugino's distinctive work,—and therefore I have given him the captain's place over all,—there is simply *no* darkness, *no* wrong. Every colour is lovely, and every space is light. The world, the universe, is divine: all sadness is a part of harmony; and all gloom, a part of peace.



THE END.




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